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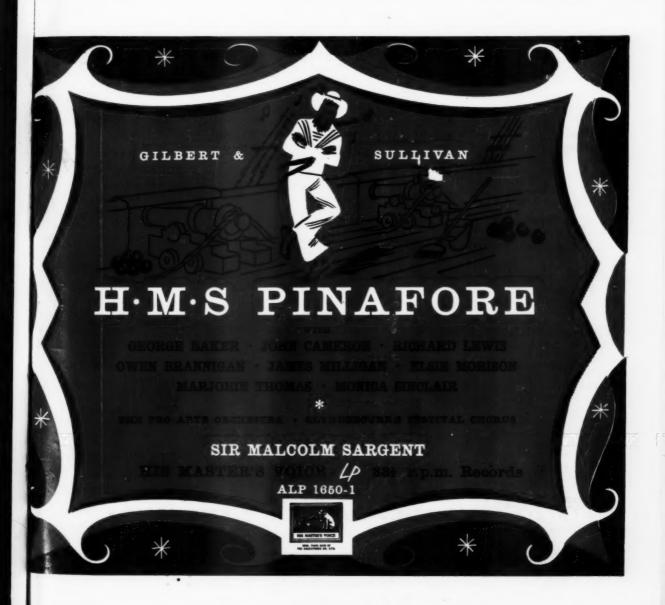
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ROS ON BROADWAY
I could have danced all night;
Some enchanted evening; Bewitched;
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FOMUNDO ROS from Edmundo Ros' Club, London STO 105

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Vortexion quality equipment



Our specialised MONITOR HEAD MODEL W.V.B. has an additional head and amplifier which enables this recorder to perform a number of useful functions. The most important of these is to monitor the recorded tape a fraction of a second after it is made, and if necessary compare it by throwing a switch, with the signal before it is recorded. This allows the recording engineer to make certain that he has made a first class recording before the artists leave the studio, without the necessity of waiting while another run through is made.

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VORTEXION RECORDERS use a synchronous capstan motor to ensure accurate recording and playback speed.

Many years of steady development have enabled us to still further improve the Vortexion W.V.A. and W.V.B. recorders.

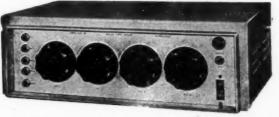
All components which could contribute to noise or reliability are carefully measured and selected individually before incorporation, resulting in an exceedingly low background noise and distortion with frequency response within \pm 1.5 db 50-10,000 c/s and \pm 3 db 40-12,000 c/s at $7\frac{1}{2}{''}$ per second.

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This is a studio quality electronic mixer suitable for any climate. The controls are hermetically sealed, and great care and selection of components to make certain reliable low noise operation, and individual screens prevent break through. The built-in power transformer is screened and potted, and all the microphone transformers are individually potted in selected heavy gauge Mumetal boxes. Front or rear inputs and outputs may be obtained to order. The normal output is 5 volt.

The 3-CHANNEL MIXER and PEAK PROGRAMME METER is similar to the above but has the additional meter fitted calibrated in 2 db steps from —20 db to +12 relative to l.m.w.—600 ohm. The meter is fed by the full P.P.M. I second time delay circuit which includes a stabiliser valve,



to ensure accurate gain and calibration. The standard output is screened primary and l.m.w.—600 ohm balanced or unbalanced by switch. Inputs and outputs may be at the front or rear, and rack panel mounting is available at the same price.

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The high standards of reproduction obtainable from records has inevitably led to demand for better reproduction from Radio. F.M. has made better sound quality possible; the standards of sound on television are also very good at the point of transmission. How much such broadcasts can be enjoyed depends entirely on the equipment used to receive them. The name of Jason has long been associated with good tuner design, and with switched F.M. Tuners in particular. The technique has now been extended for use in a tuner which will also receive the sound transmissions in all areas served by B.B.C. and I.T.A. television services, enabling TV sound to be enjoyed at hi-fi level as well.



HOME THIRD LIGHT OFF FIN

ITY UNIT

As well as providing excellent reception from FM and TV sound broadcasts, this Unit may safely be fed directly into a tape-recorder if required. Hitherto, the danger inherent in connecting to a modern TV receiver have made it impossible to take recordings. In the JTV Unit twe switched controls are used, one to select FM or AM transmissions, and one to select the programmes. The magic-eye operates in conjunction with a fine tuner for initial setting. This Unit is self-powered in conformity with other Jason Matching Equipment, and as such is suitable for shelf-mounting and is very easily installed.

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JASON amplifiers



There are three types available—the 20-watt J.2-10/Mk. II, the JSA.2 stereophonic, and the J.10 10-watt single-channel amplifier. All are part of Jason Matching Equipment, with which any of the five different tuners in the series are designed to be used.

FROM LEADING DEALERS EVERYWHERE full details of models mentioned here, together with others in the series, glodly sent on request. Demonstrations at our showrooms every Saturday morning.

FMS/2

In this carefully designed self-powered unit, A.F.C. is incorporated to eliminate drift, whilst dual-limiters combat effects of aeroplane "flutter" and a well-designed discriminator ensures minimum distortion. Model FMS/2 is designed for reception of the three B.B.C. sound programmes which are selected by the front panel control. The name of the programme lights up on the front panel as it is tuned in. The unit is styled in conformity with other Jason Matching Equipment, and as such is suitable for shelf-mounting, and is very easily installed.

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Stereo Tapes or Stereo Records

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FERROGRAPH

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The Ferrograph Series 3S is an extremely versatile instrument. Although to all intents and purposes a normal Tape Recorder, recording and playing back monaurally, it is fitted with an additional "in line" (or stacked) head. As a result, therefore, at any future time, by the simple attachment of an external unit known as the Stere-Ad, it will play stereo tapes. Alternatively, when used in conjunction with any inexpensive record player fitted with a 45/45 stereo pick-up, it will also play stereo records.

Essentially the Stere-Ad incorporates two matched preamplifiers (one for each track), together with a second

2½ watts power amplifier. Connecting the Stere-Ad to
the 3S enables the two pre-amplifiers and the two
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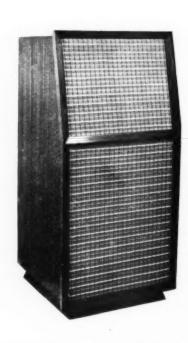
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through the marvels of Stereo recording can we
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While again paying tribute to the many fine achievements in the field of
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Over many months we at Rimingtons have devoted much care and thought to the special requirements of stereo and we now fervently believe that we have developed equipment which will do the fullest justice to the many splendid and magnificent stereo records now being issued. Beginning with Decca's miraculous Stereo Pick-up (shortly available separately at £22), and the Rimington-Porter Pre-amplifier, the equipment terminates with the Rimington "Cranbourn" Sound System, as illustrated, which consists of two specially designed speaker units of the folded-horn cabinet type.

No words of mine can adequately describe the truly superlative results which this system

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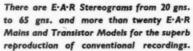






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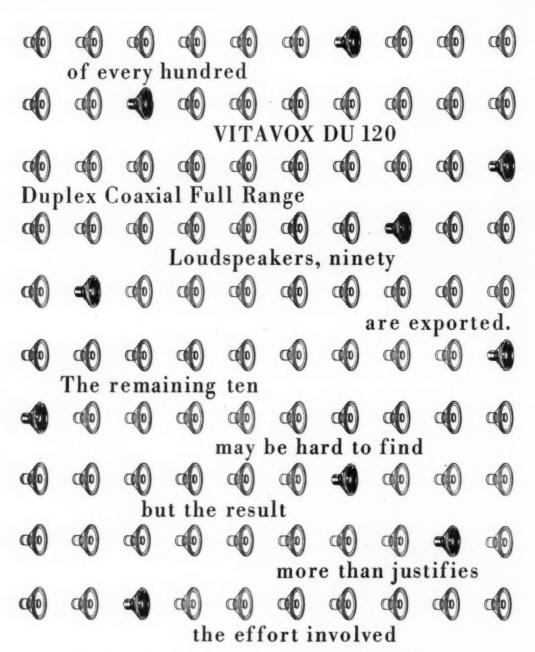
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December is the month we have been waiting for-under the guise of Christmas good will-to make our annual assault on your overdraft. It is our intention to cajole you into spending more than you can afford. In the Argo catalogue there is something for everyone from a record described by Lord Donegall as "the worst jazz record I have ever heard" (The Temperance Seven is a hilarious burlesque guaranteed to anger any jazz addict)—via a bawdy, lively production of The Beggar's Opera on two 12" L.P.'s—to the serenely lovely Masses of Byrd or Tallis. In the spoken word catalogue among other unique records is the best selling Under Milk Wood, a choice of seven complete Shakespeare plays and The Sonnets, Virgil's Georgics, that glorious pastoral poem read by C. Day Lewis, etc., etc. Why not write for our latest catalogue . . . it is never too late to spend.

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This has become a familiar enough problem particularly amongst those obliged to be careful spenders, which goes for most people. To help solve it, Volmar have produced a new and flexible programme which should meet almost all domestic requirements. If you are wanting to buy a new gramophone, you will find that any of the Volmar Stereo models can be comfortably accommodated in any average room, and that they will all play single-channel standard microgroove records as well. For this, Volmar offer the "Solent" Stereo Player with two "Vivasonic" Speakers; the "Solway" transportable player with second speaker to match and the "Kennet", a self-contained gramophone to which can be added the "K"-type amplifier with its own built-in speaker also to match.

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"SOLENT"

Playing Unit with Garrard TA/Mk. II 4-speed player and 6-watt printed circuit double-amplifier. Mahogany finished cabinet.

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10° elliptical unit in special reflex cabinet. Smooth response. Polished mahogany finish. Each

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Portable gramophone with dual purpose pick-up and ganged controls. 24 Gns. TYPE 'K' EXTENSION AMPLIFIER with speaker. 2 Cnc

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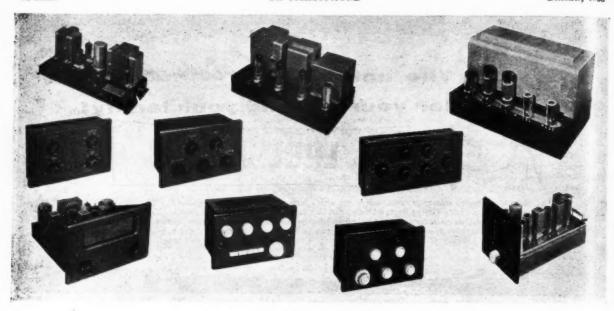
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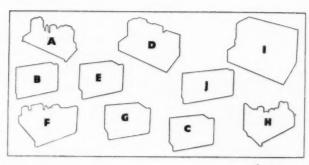
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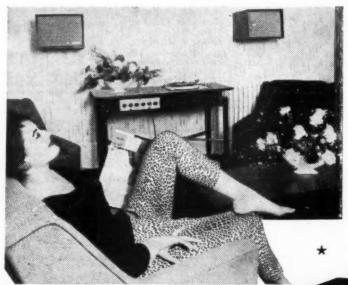
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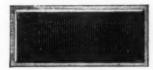
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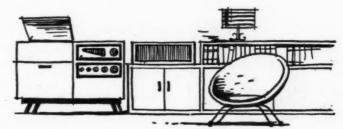


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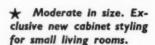
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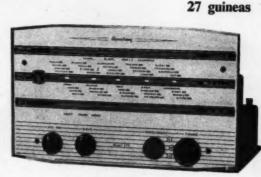
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THE GRAMOPHOME

DECEMBER 1958 - VOL. XXXVI - NO. 427

incorporating VOX . THE RADIO CRITIC . BROADCAST REVIEW

Edited by SIR COMPTON MACKENZIE . CHRISTOPHER STONE . CECIL FOLLARD

Landon Editor ANTHONY C. POLLARD . Music Editor ALEC ROBERTSON . Technical Editor P. WILSON

Editorial Office The Glade, Green Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex
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THE CRITICS' CHOICE-1958

As in recent years, we have asked our reviewers to select six discs issued during 1958 which they consider to be of outstanding interest and value, confining themselves in general to their own particular field. As the lists each year have had to be compiled before the issues for December have been completed, that month, in the previous year, may be counted in.

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Choice this year is complicated by the first issues of stereo discs, for the playing of which many readers are not yet equipped. To keep some semblance of proportion my nominations will be two stereos and four monaurals. The stereos are the D'Oyly Carte Company's complete Mikado (Decca SKL4006-7) and the six Waldteufel Waltzes, Les Patineurs, Mon Rêve, Estudiantina, Grenadiers, Pomone and España played by the Philharmonia Promenade Orchestra under Henry Krips on Col. SCX3251. In stereo I look principally for roundness and solidity of tone with separation and integration of voices and instruments in realistic proportions rather than definite pin-pointing of individuals or groups. But both these records have the latter quality, too, and it adds to the effectiveness and attractiveness. In Mikado, the performance of which is lively and strongly suggestive of the stage, this is most noticeable in the duets, trios and quartets. In the Waldteufel waltzes the realistic positioning of the woodwind and brass is quite startling in places and the style of playing, which the hypercritical may consider a trifle rough in one or two places, is admirably suited to the music and in particular illustrates vividly the essential differences between the French and Viennese varieties of waltzes. Coming now to monaurals my range is agreeably catholic. First comes the Sadler's Wells Company's excerpts from The Merry Widow (H.M.V. CLP1226), a bright, well-poised performance, admirably recorded, in no way competitive with the complete Columbia German version and containing most of the music that the majority of people will want. From many excellent orchestral LPs none has pleased me more than D.G.G. DGM 19116 which contains several numbers from Swan Lake and a group of waltzes from other

works by Tchaikovsky played by the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra under Fricsay. The playing is full of warmth and affection and has the caressing quality which the music demands. The recording is smooth and rich rather than brilliant. For something out of the ordinary run of records I am immensely attracted by Songs of Ireland by the Guan family on Delysé ECB3143. This is the sort of thing for



which the gramophone is ideally equipped for it is music in a family home which can be reproduced at actual and not reduced strength. Moreover the atmosphere is so well captured that at the end one feels that one knows the family personally. Finally a record which must be reproduced on a scale much smaller than the original for it is a group of religious songs sung by the 150 or so strong choir of the St. Paul Church, Los Angeles, but it can sound very realistic indeed at a volume level appropriate to a room and the singing is excellent (Capitol T791).

W. A. Chislett.

On the whole, not a very exciting year. It started well enough with "Contes Chantés" (H.M.V. CLPC16), with Gilbert Bécaud at the top of his form in at least five pieces of the fourteen. The lyrics, by Louis Amade, Charles Aznavour and Pierre

Delanoë, are well above the ordinary level and Bécaud's music can be most effective. I dislike it, as I've had occasion to complain before, only when he tries too hard for dramatic effects and achieves a most unpleasant stridency. The best things in the collection, to my taste, are Quand tu danses, Me-qué, Me-qué, La Corrida with its brilliant evocation of the glitter and excitement of the bullring, Les Enfants Oubliés and Madams Pompadour-this last a mélange of gaiety and sentiment in the vein of Trenet's Polka du Roi. Another attractive French collection is "I Remember Paris" (H.M.V. CLP1150). Vicky Autier, who accompanies herself on the piano, has a charming voice well suited to her material. La Vie en rose, Parlez-moi d'amour, Je tire ma reverence, Les Feuilles mortes, Le Chaland qui passe-all the good old favourites are here, together with a couple of conventional piano solos which have nothing to do with the case. There has been a far wider choice of offerings from Italy. Several of the best collections, however, were much of a muchness, with the same artists cropping up again and again. For me, it's a toss-up between "On the Shores of Sunny Italy" (Durium TLU97013) and "Italian Panorama" (Durium TLU97012). Aurelio Fierro, the Marino Marini quartet and Nella Colombo are heard in both, the lyrics are uncommonly good at best and at worst easy on the ear.

For those who enjoy the voice and guitar of Roberto Murolo, "Under the Stars of Naples" (Durium DLU96033) is good value, offering as it does such pleasant Neapolitan things as Te voglio bens, Serenata a Carolina and Statte vicino a 'mme. People who have travelled in the Tyrol—and for that matter, those who haven't—will surely all enjoy "Greetings from Tyrol" (Vox VX1010), sung and played by the Engels. It is perhaps praise enough to say that they sound a delightful and very happy family. Finally, I should like to welcome a new Paraguayan group, Los Indios (Fontana TFR6004). I don't think they have quite as much personality as the Trio Los Paraguayos groups, but their material is mostly fresh and agreeable, they are technically accomplished, and I never tire of listening to the Indian harp.

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For me this has been a concerto year. Three examples linger pleasantly in my mind. First Clifford Curzon's wonderful playing of Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto with Knappertsbusch and the Vienna Phil. (Decca LXT5391). Secondly, Menuhin's return to the loftiest heights in the Brahms Violin Concerto, with Kempe and the Berlin Phil. (H.M.V. ALP1568). He is too forwardly balanced, but the breadth and integrity of his playing are beyond praise, and he once more has the assurance and precision of his youth. And thirdly, for anyone prepared to back an outsider coming up very fast on the rails, there is Alfred Brendel's musicianly version of the two Liszt piano concertos on Vox PL10420. A too consciously virtuoso approach can make these works sound tawdry; Brendel plays them as though he believes in them as music, and he makes the listener believe in them too. He will be rather distantly balanced for some tastes, but not for mine. Among symphonies, no one who has heard it could fail to recommend Klemperer's broad, sustained reading of Beethoven's "Pastoral", played by the Philharmonia Orchestra on Columbia 33CX1532; and may we all wish him a speedy recovery from his present indisposi-The best value in chamber music would seem to be Mozart's two fabulously beautiful string quintets in C and G minor, played by the Budapest Quartet "and Friend" (as they used to say under the photographs in the glossy society weeklies); two long works on a single disc (Philips ABL3208), and smoothly and beautifully played. For the younger age groups (and most older ones too) the Philharmonia provide a sparkling selection from Tchaikovsky's ballet, Casse-Noisette, on H.M.V. ALP1609, including a lot of the bits you don't know so well, as well as those you do. A good half of the whole ballet, and what with Christmas coinciding with performances at the Royal Festival Hall, London, fathers should think very seriously about this one. Roger Fiske.

My first two choices really picked themselves, for they feature some of the finest playing on record by two men who without doubt are the greatest solo artists in jazz history. I am talking, of course, about Louis Armstrong and Charlie Parker. "Satchmo" (Brunswick LAT8211/4) traces the career of the trumpet-player through 48 of the tunes associated with him over the years, a few of them heard in the original versions but by far the greater part newly recorded. Armstrong rises to the occasion, singing and playing with exceptional zest and brilliance. In the case of "The Immortal Charlie Parker" (London LTZ-C15104/8), the five volumes contain not only a good selection of Parker's most inspired performances but also offer a large number of alternative "takes". All five of the Parker records should really be in every jazz collection, but if you can only afford one then I suggest you buy Volume (LTZ-C15107). None of the Armstrong records is obtainable

Count Basie's orchestra swings powerfully

but in a wonderfully relaxed manner in Atomic Mr. Basie" (Columbia 33SX1084), probably the best recording so far made by Basie's present-day band. Another great jazz orchestra—Duke Ellington's—is heard in "Such Sweet Thunder" (Philips BBL7203), a suite built around Shakespearean characters and episodes, composed by Ellington and Billy Strayhorn and performed with much virtuosity. This also seems the right place to recommend a further remarkable example of the jazz composer at work: "Miles Ahead" (Fontana TFL5007) consists of ten brief but exquisite "concertos" for fluegel-horn, written by Gil Evans and interpreted by Miles Davis and a small but versatile ensemble. In many ways I found this the most satisfying jazz record to be issued in 1958. My last choice gave me trouble. First of all I wanted to include a record illustrating the newest trend in jazz, the way modern musicians like Bob Brookmeyer, Jimmy Giuffre and Mose Allison are delving back into the past for their material and their inspiration. In the end, however, I decided to pick one of the most exciting vocal recordings of the year, "Gospel Singing at Newport" (Columbia 33CX10112). One side is devoted to excellent tracks by the Back Home Choir, the other to a superb set of performances by the Drinkard Singers. CHARLES FOX. the Drinkard Singers.

It has been a good year and I have found it particularly difficult to whittle down my very long list of good things. It began well with the January arrival of Michelangeli's record of concertos by Rachmaninov-his 4th-and Ravel (H.M.V. ALP1538 and, in stereo form, ASD255). The next really outstanding one was Giulini's performances of Tchaikovsky's 2nd Symphony and Moussorgsky's Night on the Bare Mountain. The orchestra was the Philharmonia (Columbia 33CX1523). Beecham's Delius record with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra is an obvious "must" (H.M.V. ALP1586) and, jumping right to the end of the year, so is Klemperer's performance of Beethoven's Choral Symphony with only passable soloists but with wonderful playing and singing from the Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus (Columbia 33CX1574-5). For my stereo choice I suggest either of the records of Rimsky-Korsakov's Scheherazade-Beecham on H.M.V. ASD251 or Monteux (with the London Symphony Orchestra) on R.C.A. SB2003. And the bargain of the year was certainly the coupling of Beethoven's 7th and 8th Symphonies by van Remoortel and the London Symphony Orchestra (Vox PL10970). TREVOR HARVEY.

In a year notable for fine operatic recitals I select that by Boris Christoff on H.M.V. ALP1585 for an example of fine basso cantante style. He sings some of Verdi's noblest music—the prayer from Simon Boccanegra being particularly fine; also the opening scene of Bellini's Norma, given with full choral honours and atmosphere, a long, full excerpt, richly rewarding. Richard Strauss's Arabella has had to struggle with the pre-eminence of Der Rosenkavalier, of

which it was first thought to be merely a rinse. The beautifully presented Decca version on LXT5403-6 with a glowing interpretation by Lisa Della Casa and the Vienna Opera is dear, but not dear for what it is: a thrilling and interesting experience.

In lighter vein, the other Strauss (Johann) is represented by a sumptuous new version of Der Zigeunerbaron (The Gipsy Baron) in which Mme. Schwarzkopf and Erich Kunz, among others, give magnificent, dashing performances much better-alas-than you ever hope to hear in the flesh (Columbia 33CX1329-30). Finally, two memorie" reminders of two artists departed. greatly loved but of what differing status! Elisabeth Schumann in Strauss and Wolf Lieder on H.M.V. COLH102 and "the Immortal Gigli", which gives you the best of the great tenor, plus some duets with De Luca, etc. (R.C.A. RB16129). PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE.

From Denmark there come two discs which prove that from the original (I will not use the term "traditional") jazz viewpoint, music prospers with the Danes. Henrik Johanssen (Tempo EXA64) and Papa Bue (Tempo EXA80) both provide some finely constructed, easy, mobile jazz that follows in the footsteps of the pioneers at their best without copying them in the ridiculous sycophantic manner of certain British and American groups. A second London LP (LTZ-K15086) by Wilbur de Paris and his new New Orleans Jazz in Boston's Symphony Halls is not quite up to the standard of one I selected as the greatest disc of 1957, but it is still infinitely more interesting than its contemporaries. It looks beyond the confines of closer walks, saints marching, and muskrats rambling through the streets of the city by the riverside, to the continuance of the spirit of jazz through the application of its basic principles to other than hoary old has-beens. At high summer, we were treated to four unusual rags by Ken Colyer and his Band, with pianist Ray Foxley. This is Decca DFE6466, one of the most intelligent and thoroughly satisfactory jazz records ever made in England by local talent. The second Original Dixieland Jazz Band in London LP (Columbia 33S1133) is not up to the first, but it shows that "pops", waltzes and pseudo-Oriental tunes can be made into good jazz by the right people, and who more "right" than these five heroes of long ago? OLIVER KING.

Brahms symphonies have this year been represented both plentifully and excellently. Columbia 33CX1536 may be instanced; first-class versions of the Third Symphony and the Academic Festival Overture, played by the Philharmonia under Klemperer. Also plentiful, in various couplings, are good recordings of Debussy's La Mer and Ravel's second Daphnis and Chloé Suite; Capitol P8395, however, manages to combine both of them in highly sensitive performances by Erich Leinsdorf and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, sumptuously recorded.

December, 1958

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and Tchaikovsky, probably the two most popular of the violinist's repertory, will ever be coupled in much better versions than on H.M.V. ALP1543. Ferras is an immaculate soloist, immaculately partnered by Silvestri and the Philharmonia; and the convenience and economy of the disc speak for themselves. Organ concertos, on the other hand, are often held to lack such immediate appeal (perhaps it is that the soloist is so often out of sight); but those of Handel are growing in popularity, and four of them (Op. 4, Nos. 1-4) are most beautifully played on D.G.G. Archive APM14085 by Eduard Müller, with the Concert Group of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis under August Wenzinger.

Out of many good concerto recordings it

is difficult to think that the Mendelssohn

One of the most immediately winning pieces of chamber music is Schubert's Trout Quintet; but curiously it did not immediately win many good LP recordings. The wait, however, is now over; Decca LXT 5433 offers a warm recording of an alert and sensitive performance by Clifford Curzon and members of the Vienna Octet. Finally, one stereo disc, offering a cornucopian measure of that dazzling sound which has so obviously been the technical feature of the year: Decca SXL2001, with Kenneth Alwyn and the London Symphony Orchestra putting on the heat in Tchaikovsky's 1812, Italian Capriccio, and Marche Slave.

MALCOLM MACDONALD.

As I've only been reviewing in these pages since July, the field is less thickly strewn with daisies than it might have been. Among symphonic records Klemperer's interpretation of Brahms's Fourth Symphony (Columbia 33CX1591) is a certain candidate; there are other successful versions of this symphony in the catalogue, but this one gives the illusion that one's never really heard, let alone understood the work before (even from Toscanini or Walter). Less stunning but very satisfying, and practical for the collector too, is Boult's coupling of Mendelssohn's Third and Fourth Sym-phonies—"Scotch and It", as a colleague of mine once denominated them-on a single disc (Nixa NCL16005). Almost symphonic are the dimensions of Adam's Giselle ballet music as conducted by Yuri Fayer (H.M.V. CLP1210-1); I've always loved the tunes, and here they are given their full proportions, much to their advantage, and performed with real style and authority. I continue (when there's a moment to play a record for pleasure) to enjoy the H.M.V. set of Verdi's Simon Boccanegra with Victoria de Los Angeles, Tito Gobbi and Boris Christoff all superb in their roles; this inclusion is as much for the captivating music as for the impressive performance (H.M.V. ALPS1634, ALP 1635-6). And among other vocal discs, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau's recital of Brahms' Magelone Romances, with Jörg Demus as pianist (DGM18480) makes a desirable companion to the miscellaneous Brahms recital that he recorded earlier. Both these are masterly examples of Lieder performance -but you enjoy them most in small doses,

"often and a little at a time" as the man in Proust said he thought about his deceased WILLIAM S. MANN.

With the exception of orchestral LPs by Count Basie, Duke Ellington and Gil Evans, all of which figure in the listing of colleague Charles Fox, my choice rests with the newer individualists in jazz. Grand Encounter on Vogue LAE12065 brings together half of the Modern Jazz Quartet, two-fifths of the Chico Hamilton Quintet and the lyrical tenor sax of Bill Perkins. Under the adult guidance of pianist John Lewis this composite unit produces music which I venture to predict will pass into future catalogues of recorded classics. Certainly Perkins has never played better nor has he received such admirable support, while the superlative guitar work of Jim Hall echoes the lessons of Charlie Christian at every turn. On Columbia 33CX10113 Paul Desmond and Gerry Mulligan, two acknowledged masters of counterpoint and symmetrical phrasing, combine their talents in a series of stimulating performances. The session found both saxophonists at or near peak form and the manner in which each one inspired the other is evident throughout the course of a remarkably consistent programme. Another Columbia release, this time 33CX10117, traces chronologically the recording career of the late Charlie Parker under Norman Granz's supervision with sixteen tracks never previously issued in Britain on microgroove. The four Quartet titles with the Hank Jones-led rhythm section represent a latter-day peak in the musical history of this brilliant but enigmatic The most individual of the jazz giant. Parker-derived stylists is Sonny Rollins whose playing on the Saxophone Colossus LP (Esquire 32-045) is free from the technical imperfections which tended to mar his Accompanied, but never earlier work. forcefully over-driven, by a supporting trio containing drummer Max Roach the tenor saxist, proves himself to be the master of ballads, blues and good humour. Art Pepper, a musician absent from the circle of active musical participation too long, consolidates his pre-eminence amongst contemporary alto players with Vogue LAC 12066 on which he is joined by Miles Davis's energetic rhythm team. Few of the newer instrumentalists possess Pepper's beauty of tone, melodic eloquence or communicative warmth of expression. Thelonious Monk has made several outstanding albums of late and London LTZ-U15120, Thelonious Himself, focuses the listener's attention on Monk's unique keyboard style. This is a record which demands repeated playings in order to assimilate every nuance of expression and probing idea. Monk's music is neither superficial nor insincere and his contributions to jazz have a lasting validity.

ALUN MORGAN.

Elsewhere in this issue readers will find a review of Beecham's new recording of the first six "Salomon" symphonies of Haydn (Nos. 93-98) which should make it quite

clear why I choose them to head my list. There is magnificent music in all of them, and at least three are far too rarely heard in our concert halls. And as one might expect, the performances on H.M.V. ALP 1624-6, in spite of the reservations I have had to make in my review, provide yet more recorded evidence that Beecham is one of the most musical conductors alive. The same quality of deep-rooted musicality can be heard in the work of yet another conductor who has been much in the news this year, although time has not yet had a chance to mellow his interpretations as it has Beecham's. Carlo Maria Giulini conducts the Philharmonia in a colourful mixed bag on Columbia 33CX1518: two of the items evoke the imaginative world of childhood— Bizet's Jeux d'Enfants and Ravel's Mother Goose suite—but the third ought also to appeal to anyone who still shares a child's delight in a good fairy-story vividly told; it's the suite from Stravinsky's Firebird, brilliantly played and recorded. There's more Stravinsky in the Decca lists, with new versions by Ernest Ansermet and the Suisse Romande Orchestra of Petrushka and The Rite of Spring; perhaps the latter hasn't quite enough primitive vitality, but Petrushka, on LXT5425, has a special vividness that that comes from Ansermet's long acquaintance with it as a ballet. The natural musicianship that makes these orchestral performances so enjoyable was also to be found in some of the chamber-music records which came my way in the past year-for example, in the Janácek Quartet's recording of Smetana's E minor string quartet ("Aus meinem Leben") on D.G.G. DG17098. These Czech players understand Smetana's idiom completely, and put their considerable technical gifts completely at the service of the music. For my last two records I have chosen "something old and something new". Purcell's second set of trio-sonatas is given a wonderfully eloquent and refined performance by the Jacobean Ensemble on Argo RG112, while Alfred Brendel, Wolfgang Marschner, Michael Gielen and the Südwestfunk Orchestra on Vox PL10530 lavish the same kind of musical insight on Schoenberg's Violin and Piano Concertos-almost persuading me to like these works as much as I respect them. JEREMY NOBLE.

Despite the prevalence of countless rock-'n'-roll and other tasteless importations this year, and notwithstanding the attempted 'revolution" of which Kwela was the outward and audible sign, there have been a wonderful lot of really first-rate records to choose from. For a good laugh, in the best possible taste, I name Parlophone GEP8642, with Ian Wallace singing songs like Down Below and The Income Tax Collector, while my prize for the most ingenious LP is for the cast of Expresso Bongo, on Nixa NPL18016. The show mercilessly flays the nether regions of the "pop" music racket, which is as it should be, and the record conveys the full effect. Being a mere man, I have fallen a victim to the sirens of the turntable, these being British girls Diane Todd, who sings -really sings-It's A Wonderful Thing To Be

Loved on Decca F10993*, and Marjorie Daw, whose EP on Columbia SEG7792 provided me with much pleasure during the summer. Then of course there was that delightful American girl with the cheerful smile and dark hair, Bonnie Guitar. Her London LP (HA-D2122) will always remind me that even in this hard-boiled era, there are still girls with sweet voices that like singing songs like Caroline Moon and Roll Along, Kentucky Moon. The most pleasing "straight" instrumental group of the year to me is the American string quintet (or is it a sextet?) called The Troubadours. From their many fascinating discs, I choose the one of music from Spain on London HA-R2095. Lastly, the most interesting novelty of the year is Parlophone R4416* on which the Barnstormers Spasm Band, with their strange instrumentation, play Whistling Rufus and Won't You Come Home, Bill Bailey? with gusto. JOHN OAKLAND.

First, a complete opera, Rossin's Most on Philips ABL3201-3. With Rossi-Lemeni in the title-role, Filippeschi as the tenor and Caterina Mancini as the soprano, it's not exactly a distinguished performance—but of a work filled with so many beautiful things that I have listened to it several times with increasing pleasure, and indulgence for Rossi-Lemeni's insufficiently noble Moses. An indispensable record, I think, is the Chaliapin issue in the "Great Recordings of the Century" series, H.M.V. COLH100. Hearing his Boris Godunov recordings in sequence gives one a marvellous idea of the greatness of the man; and his other Russian arias on the other side are equally irresistible. "Callas at La Scala", Columbia 33CX1540, with Spontini and Cherubini arias as well as "Qui la voce" and Sonnambula excerpts, shows the diva at her most exciting, and most beautiful. Of all the "standards" I have listened to through the year, Beecham's Scheherazade (H.M.V. ALP1564) has seemed to me the most remarkable, with matchless phrasing coupled to vividly colourful play-ing and buoyant rhythms (this was in the "monaural" version). Finally, one record of chamber music and one of piano. I have long admired Shostakovich's Piano Quintet, deeming it perhaps the finest composition to have come from Soviet Russia, and one of the great chamber works of our century. It is perfectly played by its original interpreters, the composer and the Beethoven Quartet, on Parlophone PMA1040. The Third String Quartet, on the other side, is a lesser work, but a pleasing one. Artur Schnabel's account of Schubert's great B flat Sonata, H.M.V. GOLH33, replaces a cherished 78 album with a disc which is more convenient (how could we ever have accepted those four-minute sections with such equanimity?) and which sounds better than the original. ANDREW PORTER.

There have been three recordings of Bach's Church Cantatas of unusual excellence in the period covered, but the one with the greatest appeal is undoubtedly The Christmas Oratorio (in reality six cantatas

to be sung during the Christmas season). It is beautifully performed by a good team of soloists with two Berlin choirs and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Fritz Lehmann and (Parts 5 and 6) Günther Arndt on D.G.G. Archive APM 14101-3, and has the advantage of one cantata complete on each of the six sides. APM14101 has on it Nos. 1 and 2, the latter containing the loveliest music in the work. Haydn's "Lord Nelson" Mass (D minor) is given a splendid performance on Vanguard PVL7071. Teresa Stich-Randall sings the solo soprano part like an angel and is well supported by the remaining numbers of the solo quartet. Mario Rossi directs the chorus and orchestra of the Vienna State Opera. I enjoyed this disc enormously.

There are three operas on my list which I know will give me lasting satisfaction. Beethoven's Fidelio (with the dialogue much cut) has, in the performance directed by Fricsay with Bavarian State Opera Orchestra and Chorus, the feel of a stage performance and is very well cast with Leonie Rysanek, Seefried, Fischer-Dieskau and Gottlob Frick in the principal parts (D.G.G. DGM 18390-1). The orchestral playing, in Wagner's Die Meistersinger, by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Kempe, is the chief glory of H.M.V.'s recording of the opera (H.M.V. ALP1506-10); but there are also a most charming Eva (Elisabeth Grümmer), an excellent Walther (Rudolf Schock), Sachs (Ferdinand Frantz) and Beckmesser (Benno Kusche) and a remarkably good Pogner (Gottlob Frick). Puccini's Suor Angelica is a more debatable choice but, taking the unsatisfactory ending in one's stride, this opera grows on one and is anyway worth having for Victoria de los Angeles's exquisite and most moving singing in the name-part. Tullio Serafin, with the Rome Opera House Orchestra, conducts the score with loving care. (H.M.V. ALP1577.)

My last choice falls on John Ireland's Piano Concerto in E flat with which is coupled Stravinsky's Capriceio (also a three-movement concerto). The slow movement of Ireland's fine work is of a heart-piercing beauty that never palls. Colin Horsley, ably accompanied by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Basil Cameron, gives the performance of his life in this work and the Capriceio, an excellent contrast, is done with equal success. (H.M.V. GLP 1182.)

ALEC ROBERTSON.

Since one of the joys of the gramophone is that it brings us, any time we want to hear them, the really outstanding executants in every sphere, and since only the most puritanical of us is unmoved by true virtuosity, I make no bones about picking some of the great performers from the discs I have heard in the year. Starker's playing of the Kodály's sonata, one of the most profoundly original masterpieces of the 'cello repertoire, on Columbia 33CX1595, is frankly phenomenal: his technique and musicianship put him in the forefront of today's 'cellists. We have had plenty of dazzling pianists, but the one who sticks in my mind and affection is Tamás Vásáry, who in a Liszt recital on

D.G.G. DGM19105 revealed, over and above a technique which makes light of all hazards, a delicacy, sensitivity and sheer poetry which transforms works which are often regarded as only showpieces. When are we going to get another disc from him? Another pianist, every one of whose records proclaim him exceptional but whom we have yet to see in this country, is Sviatoslav Richter, whose performance of Rachmaninov's First Concerto (Parlophone PMA 1037) I called not just superbly brilliant but aristocratic. The recording is not ideal, I can't stand the vibrato of the horns, and the reading of the Bach concerto on the reverse is not one I personally care for; but for all that I cannot but select this disc. His fellow-countryman Leonid Kogan, by his stylish, impeccable playing on Columbia 33CX1562, threw exciting new light on the first Paganini concerto for violin, showing it to be not a mere vehicle for flashy fiddlers but a work of great dramatic imagination. Performers, of course, neither can nor should be the be-all and end-all of our choice: the music's the thing. And so, for the sheer delight it has given me, and continues to give, I must mention Milhaud's witty and ebullient Carnaval d'Aix admirably played by Grant Johannesen and the Philharmonia under Tzipine (H.M.V. CLP 1149); and, for the endless fascination of the musical invention and striking sonorities, Britten's A Boy was Born and Rejoice in the Lamb, sung by the highly accomplished Purcell Singers on Decca LXT5416.

LIONEL SALTER.

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My first choice is the new Philips recording of Mozart's Requiem Mass (ABL3213) which for me is a great and sincere interpretation of an acknowledged masterpiece. It isn't easy to bring out the peculiarly Mozartian "radiant solemnity" that this work cries out for, but I feel that Böhm and his splendid team of soloists (Stich-Randall, Malaniuk, Kmentt, and Böhme) get very near to the peak. That inveterate admirer of Mozart—Tchaikovsky—has also caught my fancy, in the shape of a fine and relatively inexpensive disc of the Violin Concerto, played by Ida Haendel, with the Royal Philharmonic under Goossens, on H.M.V. DLP1190. The violin says almost everything it can say on this recording: it sighs, it glitters, it dances. And the orchestra is right on its toes, providing a fine and colourful accompaniment.

Many of Dvořák's shorter orchestral works provide attractive listening for a winter's evening, and one piece that comes to mind is the Serenade in E major, for string orchestra. I very much enjoyed the sheen of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra especially as they are playing under the sympathetic and persuasive baton of Rafael Kubelik on Decca LW5332. record of strings that I often turn to is the fine interpretation on Oiseau-Lyre OL50163 of Dowland's Lachrymae, played by the Philomusica of London directed by Thurston Dart. These varied and fascinating pieces make up a delightful programme, and evoke something of the glory of Elizabethan

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England. Another disc of English music stands out like the spire of some medieval cathedral. It is the Vanguard recording, on PVI.7072, of Tallis's Lamentations and Five Hymrs. The singing of the Deller Consort is here at its very best, and the music is performed with both style and authenticity. These are rare virtues as far as most recordings of early music are concerned.

Excellent work has been done on the Archive series put out by D.G.G., and I particularly remember the pleasure I derived from their disc of music by the Spaniard Diego Ortiz (APM14075, with selections on EPA37009) played by Wenzinger and Müller, with Margot Guilleaume as singer of Doulce mémoire and O felici occhi miei. DENIS STEVENS.

LETTER FROM AMERICA

By HAROLD C. SCHONBERG

F one thing in the midst of the stereo upheaval is certain, it is that stereo enhances the sound of large forces. The record companies realise this. For every stereo disc of solo voice, piano and chamber music come thirty discs of opera and orchestral music. London Records, which has committed itself almost entirely to stereo (although it is said that despite their vows they are going back to releasing some monophonic LP discs), is making available many of its operas. Here are some on the current list: Lehár's Giuditta; Mozart's Nozze and Don Giovanni; Giordano's Andrea Chénier; Verdi's Trovatore; Ponchielli's Gioconda; Gluck's Alceste; the Gilbert and Sullivan Mikado and Pirates of Penzance plus goodness knows how many orchestral discs). Most of these operas have been previously available. In stereo, they sound much more impressive. Le Nozze di Figaro is especially effective. In the big sextet, with the Count snarling out of one speaker, Figaro from another, the Notary stuttering away somewhere in the middle, and assorted voices coming from all directions, the result is breathtaking.

Quite a few other operatic albums have been issued by other companies. Most of them are out in monophonic pressings, though stereo versions are sure to follow. Victor's current release features three operas-Madame Butterfly (stereo and monophonic), La Gioconda and Lucia di Lammermoor. The Butterfly set is excellent, one of the best to be had. Anna Moffo and Cesare Valletti sing Cio-Cio-San and Pinkerton, respectively, and the Rome Opera House Orchestra and Chorus are conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Moffo's intensely feminine (as opposed to "operatic") conception of Butterfly makes the characterisation very appealing; and she sings with steadiness and utmost beauty of tone. There is no forcing, no wobble; everything is sweet and lyric. And the admirable Valletti, a bel conto tenor, also sings with taste. He has musicianship, can spin out a long phrase without breaking it up with sobs and yelps, and is the ideal partner for a lyric soprano like Moffo. Leinsdorf falls into the spirit of things, conducting with polish and restraint.

The Lucia set features Roberta Peters, Jan Peerce, and Giorgio Tozzi. Leinsdorf is again the conductor. I suppose this is a good performance, although I simply cannot work up any enthusiasm for so feeble an opera as Lucia. Peters has

developed into a very accurate coloratura soprano. The trouble is that despite her really brilliant singing, her voice tends to be white and somewhat devoid of personality. Peerce is an indestructible tenor, and Tozzi is one of the best young basses around-a cantante stylist of no mean order. Gioconda also features an indestructible singer-Zinka Milanov. At this stage of her career she is a little unsteady, but she still is capable of some ravishing pianissimo singing, and in her "Suicidio" she summons up the resources for a performance in the grand tradition. Others in the cast are Giuseppe di Stefano, in lusty voice; Leonard Warren, whose voice sounds as big as ever; and Rosalind Elias, the young Metropolitan Opera mezzo who scored such a success in Vanessa last season. Elias, who sings the role of Laura in Gioconda, has an appealing voice and uses it in a musicianly manner. Fernando Previtali conducts the chorus and orchestra of Santa Cecilia.

Verdi's Simon Boccanegra, an opera that has always remained on the periphery of the repertoire, comes to us in a three-disc E.M.I. Capitol set, with leading roles sung by Tito Gobbi, Boris Christoff, Giuseppe Campora and Victoria de los Angeles. Gabrielli Santini leads the Rome Opera House Orchestra. As has been pointed out many times in the past, Simon Boccanegra is a mish-mash of styles that takes in some crude early Verdi and some remarkable episodes that only the mature composer was capable of. Verdi, of course, kept on reworking the opera and was never satisfied with it. De los Angeles sings with ravishing tone. This is probably the greatest operatic performance she has ever recorded. The other singers are all capable, which makes this Boccanegra as close to a definitive version as one is likely to get.

Of the Columbia Tosca, less can be said; Antonietta Stella sings the title role. She has, basically, a gorgeous voice, but it unfortunately is not too well controlled. Some of her high notes are pinched and wobbly, and there really is little subtlety in her conception. Nor is there much in Gianni Poggi's stentorian-sounding Cavaradossi. The best singing, and finest artistry, is contributed by Giuseppe Taddei, whose oily and venomous Scarpia is an impressive achievement. Tullio Serafin leads the San Carlo orchestra and chorus with his customary experience.

Columbia's other releases are mainly orchestral. There is a curious performance of Beethoven's First Piano Concerto, with Glenn Gould and the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann (Bach's Piano Concerto No. 5 is on the reverse). The curiosity is not in young Gould's playing, for he has rhythm, wonderful articulation and a fine musical mind. But the cadenzas he himself has written are weird. In his programme note to the disc he makes all kinds of explanations for them, and he points out all kinds of precedent; but the fact somehow remains that twelve-tone procedures simply do not fit into the Beethoven C major Concerto. Another Columbia disc, with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, is devoted to Strauss' Don Quixote, the solo 'cello part played by Lorne Monroe. Monroe is capable of some warm playing, but only too often, especially in rapid passages, his intonation is not what it should be. Better Quixotes are available.

Angel has a few album sets. One of them, supposed to be a complete Sleeping Beauty by Tchaikovsky, is anything but. "Substantially complete" should not be interpreted as "complete". In any case, George Weldon, who leads the Philharmonia Orchestra, directs the score without much imagination or flair. Much more elaborate is Angel's four-disc set devoted to all of the Moussorgsky songs, sung by Boris Christoff. Some points about this ambitious undertaking are worth mentioning.

The songs are presented in strict chronological order, even if this means breaking up so well known a cycle as Songs and Dances of Death. Christoff, of course, sings in Russian, and we can trace the development of Moussorgsky as a song writer from his early Schumann and Glinka-like endeavours to the unconventional austerities of the later works. Not all here is an unalloyed pleasure; some of the songs will be of interest only to specialists. Christoff is a singing actor blessed with a superb voice. One guesses that not since Chaliapin has there been a bass so suited to an undertaking like this. He wrings the last drop of drama, humour, satire and lyricism from the music. The album is accompanied with a stupendous booklet in French, Italian and English, and all of the songs are presented in Russian script. Christoff himself supplies most of the notes on the music. So far, so good. But whoever was responsible for the English translation obviously was no musician; nor, indeed, was English his mother tongue. There are too many errors and grammatical slips. And the booklet, incidentally, also came apart while being handled. Pages started drifting to the floor.

Most of the songs are sung to the piano accompaniments of Alexandre Labinsky, but quite a few have orchestral backgrounds supplied by Georges Tzipine and the Radio-diffusion Orchestra. Christoff explains that in many cases Moussorgsky had expressed a desire to orchestrate several of the songs and song cycles. The composer never got around to it, and Christoff uses orchestrations by Rimsky-Korsakov, Glazunov and Labinsky. This appears to me to be the

only serious blot in the album. To hear the Songs and Dances of Death with an orchestra behind the singer gives me a Hollywoodish feeling. Moussorgsky left the music with piano accompaniment, and that is how it should have been sung.*

Among other album sets, two are of importance. E.M.I. Capitol has released a three-disc set of the first six of the twelve Haydn London (or Salomon) Symphonies: Nos. 93-98. Sir Thomas Beecham conducts the Royal Philharmonic, and he is in top form. Neither objectively "classic" nor egocentrically "romantic", he leads his orchestra in genial-sounding, rhythmically alert performances. And the finest available performance of the Bruckner Eighth Symphony comes from Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic in a two-disc Angel set.

Paul Robeson, according to newspaper reports, has been having an enthusiastic

* This set of records will be available in the U.K. this month (H.M.V. ALP1652-55). It is hoped that our review will appear in the January issue. We have been advised by E.M.I. that the binding of the booklet which will accompany the issue in this country has now been improved. See also "Passing Notes" on p. 325.—Ed.

reception on his return to England. His first disc in many years has been released in America by Vanguard (monophonic and stereo), and it contains folk songs, spirituals and the usual Robeson repertoire. He sounds fine on the disc-much more impressive than in his Carnegie Hall appearance earlier this year-and his dignified bass voice booms as nobly as ever. From another small company, M.G.M., comes a version of Bach's Art of Fugue, transcribed for string orchestra by Arthur Winograd and conducted by him. This is an intelligent realisation. Winograd leaves out the clavier contrapunti, wisely of course, and ends where Bach put down his pen. Which means that the recording suddenly comes to a finish with a nerve-wracking emptiness, just as one is getting set for the fugue on BACH. Beethoven's Grosse Fuge occupies the reverse of the disc, again in a Winograd transcription for string orchestra. The music loses out. Not only does Winograd take fast tempos, with the result that the music sounds absolutely jaunty, but the sense of strain, of tussling with the Infinite, is missing; and that sense of strain is one of the things that makes the Grosse Fuge the shattering experience it can be.

Fennell, a member of the staff of the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, U.S.A., formed this ensemble of virtuosi in 1952 with the two-fold object of playing every type of wind music, ranging from the wind serenades of Mozart to works for full band, and also of encouraging composers to write for this medium.

A second record by the same band is Mercury MRL2535. Entitled "La Fiesta Mexicana", it consists of five works written for military band by American composers. La Fiesta, described as a Mexican Folk Song Symphony and composed by H. Owen Reed, occupies the whole of one side, the reverse having a Canzona by Peter Mennin, Psalm by Vincent Persichetti, A Solemn Music by Virgil Thomson, and an impressive Chorale and Alleluia by Howard Hanson. The only other records by this ensemble are marches (Mercury MRL2512 and 2567), each disc devoting one side to Sousa and the reverse to other American and to British works, including Kenneth Alford's Colonel Bogey. They are notable in that the percussion parts have been rescored by Fennell, who has described himself as a "reformed percussionist". Consequently, this important section of the band has parts which are far more interesting than the usual "um-chucks" (as drummers call them). Another overseas combination, the American Symphonic Band of the Air (70 players), conducted by Dr. William Revelli, appears on Brunswick LAT8207. Under the title of "Band Encores", there are thirteen contrasted works, mostly of lighter nature.

Apart from the three continental bands alluded to below, the remaining military band records to be mentioned are by British Service bands. An outstanding one is "The American Scene", a ten-inch disc issued by Vox (VX1180). The sleeve describes it as a concert of American Band Music, and there are ten works by four composers who have written them specially for the band medium. Two of them, American Scene and Kentucky 1800, both by Grundman, are overtures, the other eight consisting of light pieces, all played in magnificent style by H.M. Welsh Guards' Band, under the baton of Major F. L. Statham. It is surprising that, amongst the best band records of the period under review, one is of British works played by an American band and the other of American works played by a British band.

The Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards, conducted by Major F. J. Harris, appears on Decca LK4181—"Holiday in England". As its title denotes, it mainly consists of tunes from (or depicting) various parts of England, together with two longer programme pieces, both transcriptions, Ansell's Plymouth Hou Overture and a selection from German's Merrie England. There is also Eric Coates' march, Calling All Workers, here heard in its entirety, not just the snippets used in "Music While You Work". A second Decca production featuring the same band (LK4184) is "An Album of Military Band Music", though only one item is not a transcription, the first suite of Holst mentioned above as being recorded by the Eastman Ensemble. The others are arrange-

MILITARY AND BRASS BANDS ON LP

By HAROLD C. HIND

UNTIL the introduction of long playing records, the enthusiast who made a speciality of collecting discs of military and/or brass bands had every cause to be satisfied with the output of the record companies. As soon as a new brass band composition had been used for a contest, a recording by one of the prize-winners was available, and nearly every programme piece in the repertoire of both types of band

could be obtained.

Unfortunately, the stream of records has now shrunk almost to a trickle, so that military and brass band enthusiasts have become discontented with the supply, and I have received many letters asking me if I could persuade the companies to change their policy. But, of course, financial considerations enter into it, for, despite the contention of the members of the brass band movement that they are sufficiently numerous to be catered for, the fact cannot be overlooked that they are really only a small proportion of the record-buying public, and that their numbers, like the diminishing number who are interested in military band

discs, hardly warrant a greater output.

A survey of the field of LP band records made over the last two years by the major firms reveals that they fall roughly into four categories, viz.: (a) original works, specially composed for military band, (b) albums of programme pieces, (e) records entirely devoted to military marches, and (d) brass band records of programme works and

novelties. (Incidentally, the term militory band is used in a broad sense, including civilian bands constituted according to the instrumentation used by bands of the three Services.) Unfortunately, there have been few original military band compositions ever written by British composers, apart from marches, parade pieces and trivial "novelties" such as cornet trios or descriptive works. There are notable exceptions, viz.: the two suites by Holst, the Suite of English Folk Songs and the Toccata Marziale by Vaughan Williams, two works by Gordon Jacob, a light suite, Woodland Pictures, and a grand march, The Spirit of Pageantry, by Percy Fletcher (who was awarded the first and third prizes respectively for these two items in a competition sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Musicians), together with notable contributions by Josef Holbrooke, Walton O'Donnell, etc., and, in concerto form, by Denis Wright and Norman Demuth.

The four works by Holst and Vaughan Williams have been grouped on an LP under the title of "British Band Classics" (Mercury MRL2001). These are played, not by a British band, but by the Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble, directed by Frederick Fennell. This is a fine band of about fifty comparatively young musicians, and the playing of these three suites and toccata is particularly satisfying to those of us who have known them since they were first composed over thirty years ago.

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NIXA

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(Words: Sebastian Shaw; Music: Donald Swann)

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Sir John Barbirolli

conducting the Hallé Orchestra Suppe—"Pique Dame"—Overture
"Light Cavalry"—Overture

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conducting the London Baroque Ensemble "Marching and Waltzing with Beethoven" March in F (No. 3): March in C (No. 2): March In F (No. 1) (1809-1810)

Waltz in D: Waltz in B Flat: Waltz in E Flat (1819)

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VANGUARD

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with Desmond Dupré (lute); Stanley Taylor (recorder) and the Alfred Deller Consort "The Holly and The Ivy" (Christmas Carols of Old England)

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conducting the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Soloists and Vienna Chamber Choir J. S. Bach—Cantata No. 122 "Das Neugeborne Kindelein" Cantata No. 133 "Ich Freue Mich In Dir"

PVL. 7061 (12" L.P.)

Cantata No. 63 "Christen Atzet Diesen Tag" PVT. 10003 (10" L.P.)

Martha Schlamme (soprano)

with Chorale les Chardonnerets de Nancy, Ensemble Vocale de Beauvais "Chansons de Noël" (Christmas Carols of France)

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Anton Paulik

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Anton Heiller

conducting the Vienna State Opera Orchestra with Teresa Stich-Randall, soprano (A Bach Guild Recording) Johann Sebastian Bach-Cantata No. 51, "Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen"
Cantata No. 209, "Non sa che sia dolore"

PVL 7078 (12" L.P.)





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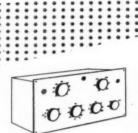
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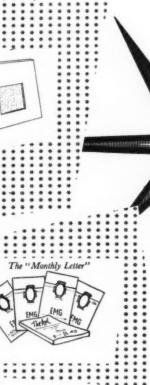
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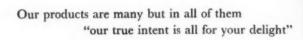
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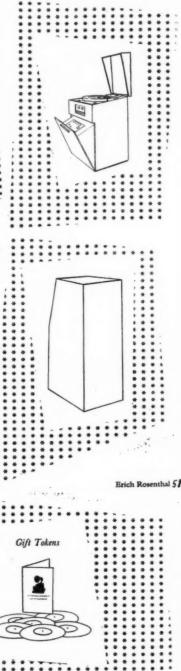
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ments of works which frequently find a place in band programmes, including Ansell's Three Irish Pictures and Arthur Wood's Three Dale Dances. (The suite form is very popular with military bands.) A third record by the same combination, "Hi-Fi— The Grenadier Guards", includes The Spirit of Pageantry (Percy Fletcher's prize-winning composition for band), three overtures and two patrols (Decca LK4188).

Another well-filled disc is Delysé-Envoy VOY9138, on which the Royal Horse Guards' Band, under Capt. J. E. Thirtle, plays a very varied programme ranging from the Nimrod movement from the Enigma Variations to a version of the Last Post combined with the hymn tune, Abide with me. This is the first band record to be issued by this company and it is hoped that

more will follow.
Two records, "Highland Pageantry" (R.C.A. RD27053) and "Bearskin and Tartan" (Columbia 33SX1075), include pipes and drums as well as the bands, the former of the Black Watch-Royal Highland Regiment (Bandmaster J. Baker) and the latter of H.M. Scots Guards (Lieut.-Col. S. Rhodes).

H.M.V. have issued records of the 1956 and 1957 S.S.A.F.A. Searchlight Tattoos at the White City (DLP1131 and 1161) with items by massed bands and the 751st. U.S. Air Force Band, whilst Columbia 33SX1070 includes excerpts from the Royal Tournament of 1957. As souvenirs they are interesting, but they do not demonstrate military music at its best.

H.M. Irish Guards' Band, conducted by Capt. C. H. Jaeger, have managed to get fourteen pieces on H.M.V. CLP1076. Five of these are in Spanish idiom and amongst the others are the regimental quick march, St. Patrick's Day, the slow march, Let Erin Remember, Grainger's Shepherd's Hey, Rimsky-Korsakov's Dance of the Tumblers and Eric Coates' Wood Nymphs, the last-named displaying beautiful clarinet tone.

H.M.V. CLP1196 presents the Band of the Royal Marines School of Music under the direction of Lieut.-Col. F. Vivian Dunn. The items on this disc are quite varied, three of them being standard works, viz: Hungarian March (Berlioz), Jesu, joy of man's desiring (Bach), and the least-known of Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance Marches, viz, No. 5. The remaining seven pieces are of lighter nature and include two by Leroy Anderson, whose tuneful concert numbers are very popular in their military and brass band transcriptions.

The three Continental discs are of marches. They are: "Matador" with the Band of the Spanish Air Force, Madrid—six marches and six pasodobles (Brunswick LAT8163); 'Sound on Parade", a ten-inch record of the Band of the Army Guard Battalion, Vienna (Vox VX1130) - ten Austrian marches; and, finally, a newly issued Vox record (VX1410) of another Austrian band, "Deutschmeister", playing ten marches of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is instructive to compare the sound of these bands with that of the British and American Bands when playing similar music. That of the Spanish combination does not differ

materially (except for over-enthusiastic percussion players), but the two Austrian bands have an entirely different timbre, due to their instrumentation varying considerably from ours and from that of America, particularly in the fact that the woodwind section does not sound strong enough for the

If the output of military band LP recordings is comparatively small, that of brass bands is even smaller. During the past two years I have encountered only four by the major firms. In 1956 Columbia presented Munn and Felton's Works Band in a record consisting of marches, novelty numbers, a cornet carillon, hymn tunes, and a piece rejoicing in the title of Bees-a-buzzin. The conducting is shared by Harry Mortimer and S. H. Boddington (33S1089).

Three Decca discs (LF1262-3-4) were made by the massed bands of Foden's Motor Works, Fairey Aviation, and Morris Motors, conducted by Harry Mortimer. These records are called "Men of Brass" and consist of transcriptions for brass band. The two longest works are the overtures "1812" and Poet and Peasant. The other fourteen items include the Introduction to Act 3 of Lohengrin, Chopin's Polonaise Militaire and Rachmaninov's Prelude in C sharp minor (though not actually in that key in the band arrangement). The recording took place in Belle Vue Gardens, Manchester, the Mecca of brass band contests for over a century. The playing on all the four brass band records is good, but it is much to be deplored that some company does not issue on a long-playing disc some of the fine contest works by Elgar, Ireland, Bliss, and Vaughan Williams, to mention only four of a large number of composers commissioned to write them.

If the companies decided to issue an increased number of military band and brass records, would the sales justify the action? I wonder.

The Author

Dr. Harold C. Hind, is a recognised authority on military bands and brass bands, and an adjudicator of band contests. He is the author of the articles Military Band and Brass Band in the new edition of Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Formerly Director of Music, Battersea Grammar School, he was (in 1945) appointed Inspector of Schools, Cardiff, and in 1949 was invited to organise, and become the first Principal of, the Cardiff College of Music and Drama which, housed in Cardiff Castle, now has over 750 students taking full-time or part-time courses. Dr. Hind's degrees and diplomas are D.Mus.(Edinburgh), B.Mus.(London), F.G.S.M., Hon. F.T.C.L., L.R.A.M. and A.R.C.M. His literary works include The Brass Band, The Orchestra and Its Instruments and The School Brass Band Book. It is interesting to note that, at his College, Dr. Hind has organised a full "military" band of sixty instrumentalists, including forty woodwind players. They rehearse and perform music of symphonic standard.

GIACOMO PUCCINI

On December 22nd, one hundred years ago, Giacomo Puccini was born in Lucca, an event commemorated this month by a recording of The Girl of the Golden West, reviewed elsewhere in this number. Another recording of the opera is to follow next year and also a further recording of Madame Butterfly. This leaves unrecorded only Edgar, his second opera and La Rondine (The Swallow) which immediately preceded the Trittico. According to the critics The Swallow is a bird with a broken view by broken wing, but one would welcome some extracts from it, and certainly recordings of the Mass in A flat and one of his two orchestral pieces, the Capriccio Sinfonico (1883) which one of his biographers describes as "a fine work, full of youth, life, and wayward caprice, often with a touch of the bizarre that is original in the best sense of the word".

In his centenary year, as Spike Hughes writes in an excellent article, Puccini and the Public, in Ricordi's house journal for October, "Puccini's operas are more popular with the public, more widely performed than ever before" and, he adds, there is a "continually growing recognition of the attraction of other operas besides the immortal Bohème, Tosca, and Butterfly". We hope to print, in the March 1959 number of The Gramophone, a critical article on the composer, and the recordings of his operas, by Mosco Carner, who has a largescale book on the composer now in the

Meanwhile we pay our grateful tribute to this much-loved composer whose beautiful music has brought so much pleasure into the lives of thousands, and will continue to do so as long as men have human hearts.

REVIEWERS' NOTES

J.N. writes:

Last month, in reviewing a performance of Bartók's Miraculous Mandarin by Previtali and the Royal Philharmonic, I described the older Mercury recording as "unfor-tunately no longer obtainable". I'm only too glad to find I was misinformed; this is a disc I would commend to all admirers of Bartók (Mercury MRL2541).

R.F. writes:

Last month I praised the outstandingly interesting sleeve note on Decca's disc of Haydn sonatas played by Backhaus, and almost added that much of the information seemed to have been taken from Robbins Landon's book on Haydn. I now learn that there is an excellent reason for this; the sleeve-note is by Robbins Landon himself, and the copies in the shops will have his name on, though the one I saw was unsigned.

On page 213 of the October issue P.H.-W. commented upon the rare appearance of Di Stefano on the Decca label; however it now seems that this will cease to be a rarity as this artist is now under contract to Decca.

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TCHAIROVSKY: Swan Lake ballet. Philharmonia—Kurtz	ALP1644 RB16073	41/8 41/8 39/11
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Angeles, etc. DYLAN THOMAS reading his works. Vol. 1. 41/9. Vol. 2. 41/9. WILLIAM THOMAS reading his works. Vol. 1. 41/9. Vol. 2. 41/9.	ALP1634/6	110/6
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	ERSION	15/3
WALIGHAN WILLIAMS: Serenade to Music. Soloists. c-Sir	SED5553	12/10



(a)



Delische
Symphony No. 2. D major, Op. 36
Overture: Leonore III
Berlin Philarmonic Orchestra
Conductor Fritz Lehman
DEM 1847

DELIBES

"Coppelia" Ballet Seles
Banbrug Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: Fritz Lehman
DGM 1847

DELIBES

"Coppelia" Ballet Seles
Banbrug Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: Fritz Lehman
DGM 1847

MOZART

Funtatais, C minor, K. 475
Piano Sonata, F. major, K. 494
Cornal Hansen, Mozart Piano
DGM 1849

Laudate Dominum, K. 339
from "Vesperae soleanes de confessore"
E incernatius et s. K. 477
from the Great C minor Mass
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ANALYTICAL NOTES

By

AND FIRST REVIEWS

ROGER FISKE . TREVOR HARVEY . PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE MALCOLM MACDONALD . WILLIAM S. MANN . JEREMY NOBLE ANDREW PORTER . ALEC ROBERTSON . LIONEL SALTER . DENIS STEVENS



* indicates a stereophonic recording

ORCHESTRAL

BACH. The Musical Offering (arr. Markevitch). Denise Gouarne (harpsichord), Henri Bronschwak (violin), Jacques Neilz ('cello), Fernand Dufrène (flute), with the French National Radio Orchestra conducted by Igor Markevitch. Columbia 33CX1590 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8\frac{1}{2}d. P.T.).

Munchineer (9/85) LXT8038
For his Musical Offering to Frederick the Great, Bach collected together thirteen works of varying scope, and employing varying musical resources, had them engraved and printed at his own expense, and eventually sent off a handsomely bound copy to Potsdam. The fact that these works were engraved in a rather odd manner, some on upright pages and some on oblong sheets, has long misled musicians into thinking that there was neither rhyme nor reason behind their planning and composition.

Hans David, who has not only written a special study of The Musical Offering, but is also responsible for the best available edition of the complete work (G. Schirmer) proved thirty years ago that the structure of the work was far from being haphazard. As the original edition shows, the Offering was intended to begin with the Three-Part Ricercar and end with the Six-Part. In the middle would stand the Trio-Sonata, a four-movement work forming the centre arch of this imposing fugal façade. Dr. David further proved that the ten canons were divisible into two groups of five—the first group being restricted to canons using the actual theme, the second to canons derived from parts of it in various guises. The distinction therefore is almost one of strict and free canon, though in practice Bach's ingenuity is far more subtle.

Only in three items did Bach specify instrumentation: two violins in the Unison Canon; and in the Trio Sonata and Mirror Canon flute, violin, and continuo ('cello and harpsichord). Both the ricercar pieces are playable on keyboard instruments, though the six-part ricercar is more effective

on the organ than on the harpsichord. The other canons sound well when played by strings, but much less satisfactory when entrusted to such wind instruments as cor anglais and bassoon.

What we hear on this new Columbia recording is (a) the Rivercar a 3, (b) nine of the ten canons, (c) the Trio-Sonata with the remaining canon inserted between its third and fourth movement, and finally (d) the Rivercar a 6. Thus the symmetry of the work as a whole is spoilt, and one of the canons is mixed up with the Trio-Sonata merely because it happens to make

Christmas 1958

May we suggest that a subscription to "The Gramophone" would make an excellent Christmas gift carrying your Good Mishes throughout the coming year. A note from you, together with a remittance of twenty-four shillings, for any part of the world, and we will send a Greetings card advising your friend of the gift and its donor.

use of the same instruments. But this is not the only fault to be found with Markevitch's version. He has apparently not grasped the fact that a canon is a piece of music destined to be performed according to rule—academic music, in a sense, though transformed by Bach into music devoid of pedantry. The utmost concentration is required if this kind of music is to be fully appreciated, and the least a Bach-loving record connoisseur can expect is a breather between each canon. But Markevitch does not approve of breathers. The nine canons are arranged in a continuous sequence with variegated orchestration, the

result being unhappily reminiscent of the kind of musical switch heard on the bandstand at the end of a pier. A more musically indigestible, unpleasant arrangement would be hard to devise: we are rushed non-stop through fifteen minutes of canons at the unison, canons in augmentation and contrary motion, crab canons and modulating canons (all in C minor) and at the end of it all we are left only with the impression that Markevitch has successfully spiked every canon within earshot.

For reasons best known to himself, Markevitch has chosen to ignore the fine edition of Hans David and other correct ones by Smend and Landshoff. He has put the clock back more than half a century by returning to the Bachgesellschaft edition that Dörffel made in 1885. Why? Presumably because this edition of the complete works of Bach is still regarded with awe and reverence by performers and conductors who do not realise that Bach research has moved on. Dörffel's text consists of sheer musical nonsense in parts, yet it is precisely this nonsense which Markevitch has now decided to elaborate with newlycontrived scoring, hardly any of it remotely connected with Bach's intentions.

Judge for yourselves how serious a misrepresentation this is of a masterpiece of instrumental polyphony, by listening to the opening Canon of Side 1, Band 2. Again on Side 1, try the spot in the Canon in Augmentation and Contrary Motion, just 2½ inches from the edge of the disc. Is it Bach or Schoenberg? When you turn to Side 2 and discover that the Trio-Sonata has been arranged with orchestral interludes, littered with faulty trills and spoiled by a poor continuo realisation, you will (I think) have no desire to continue further. Turn to the Decca record by Münchinger and all these problems disappear as if by magic: the playing is clean and honest, the text is almost irreproachable, the tempi musical and stylish, and the whole approach one of genuine enthusiasm. The sleeve-note, by Markevitch himself, shows how complete is his misunderstanding of the work. D.S.

BACH. Brandenburg Concertos.

No. 1 in F major, BWV1046: No. 2 in F major, BWV1046: No. 3 in G major, BWV1048 (RB16074): No. 3 in G major, BWV1049: No. 5 in D major, BWV1050: No. 6 in B flat major, BWV1051 (RB16075). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. R.C.A. RB16074-5 (two 12 in., 57s. 6d. plus 22s. 5d. P.T.). S.C.O., Münchinger (8/56) LXT5198-9 Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, Wenzinger (8/56) APM14011-2, AP13016 Ensemble, Horenstein (12/55) PL122 Philomusica, Dart (8/58) OL50169 (5/58) OL50169.

This R.C.A. set of Brandenburgs is simply the mixture as before. Brilliantly played here and there, especially as regards the Jagd-Waldhorning in the first concerto and the trumpeting in the second. Yet everything seems so slick and synthetic. The sound is not bad, but the size of the orchestra used precludes any possibility of it ever being good. The strings are hard, and I am

shocked to say that violinist Richard Burgin is way out of tune at the beginning of the slow movement in No. 2. It sounds as if his D string were flat.

In No. 5 Lukas Foss plays on what sounds like a replica of an eighteenth-century piano, and though his interpretation is crisp and musical the tone of the instrument does not appeal to me. Munch appears to have no particular instinct for colour, dynamics, or phrasing, so that the more repetitive and lumbering passages, such as the opening of No. 6, give an impression of unmitigated boredom. As a straightforward traditional performance this set cannot measure up to Münchinger's on Decca, nor can it hope to match the style of the Philomusica set issued by Oiseau-Lyre. The best thing about this new release is the sleeve-note by Alfred Frankenstein, Music and Art Editor of the San Francisco Chronicle.

BACH. Brandenburg Concertos. No. 3 in G major, BWV1048: No. 4 in G major, BWV1049. David Oistrakh (violin), Alexander Korneyev, Naum Zeidel (flutes), Chamber Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Barshai. Parlophone PMB1013 (10 in., 22s. 3d., plus 8s. 8½d. P.T.).

The selling-point of this record is Oistrakh, who plays Brandenburg No. 4 beautifully, but rather as if it were a violin concerto with subsidiary parts for flutes and string orchestra. The performance of Brandenburg No. 3, on the reverse, is rather heavy and sluggish, without much style, and without a middle movement, though (as if to make up for it) the players dwell for a very long time on the two isolated chords.

No. 4 shows Oistrakh to be an exact rather than an inspired player of Bach, and though it must be admitted that the ensemble is as accurate as one could desire, the recording is a trifle woolly. In the slow movement, the three soloists play much more lyrically, and with excellent blend of tone. The flute tone is almost entirely free from wobble, and some of the sequential passages sound most melting and attractive. There is a wonderfully slow, measured trill at the end of the slow movement, which indicates, I suppose, that Russian conductors such as Barshai (new to the catalogues) find time to read treatises on how to perform baroque music. In the finale, Oistrakh again comes to the fore, making the most of his wild, crossstring patterns, and generally moving things onward with great verve and brilliance. Although this is a somewhat uneven disc, it can be recommended to Oistrakh devotees.

BACH. Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G major. Rodolfo Felicani (violin), Joseph Bopp and Hugo Haldemann (flutes), Basle Chamber Orchestra conducted by Paul Sacher. Philips ABE10065 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3\frac{1}{2}d. P.T.).

A clean performance, typical of Sacher, with a genuine chamber orchestra and stylish soloists. The harpsichordist, who is

not credited (though his name may appear on the label eventually) plays with great rhythmic strength and produces a good tone. The trio of flutes and violin are wellbalanced as players in addition to being satisfactorily placed in relation to the tutti.

Sacher adopts excellent tempi, allowing for adequate brilliance in the outside movements and a genuinely lyrical feeling (though without dragging) in the slow movement. There is an admirable recording acoustic, which gives sufficient resonance yet never obscures detail.

D.S.

BACH. Concerto in A minor for Harpsichord, Flute and Violin, BWV1044.
Karl Mess (flute), Susanne Lautenbacher (violin) Helma Elsner (harpsichord).
Harpsichord Concerto
No. 3 in D major, BWV1054.
Helma Elsner (harpsichord), Pro
Musica Orchestra, Stuttgart, conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. Vox
PL10730 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d.
P.T.).

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Concerto BWV 1044:
Solisti di Zagreb, Janigro (9/57) PVL7031
Adency, G. Jones, Dart, Philomusica (10/58)
OL50168

Concerto BWV 1054 Nef, O.L. Ens., Colombo (11/54)OL 50042 After this month there won't be another version available of the D major clavier concerto, as the Oiseau-Lyre/Nef version is being axed. It wasn't really successful as a performance, so tears are hardly called for. But it reminds me of the ill-luck which seems to have dogged this concerto; another now deleted Nixa was no more satisfactory. And this new account, though neat enough and quite tasteful, doesn't fill the bill either; the orchestra sounds bass-heavy, too near the mike, and so overwhelming. The finale doesn't lilt; one hears three stresses in a bar instead of one. The solo playing is business-like rather than graceful, and Miss Elsner doesn't attempt to fill in the pauses between the sections of the slow movement.

The triple concerto on the other side also has an overpowering sound to it; the finale comes off best, but the performance as a whole yields clearly to the Oiseau-Lyre/Philomusica one which I agree with D.S. is the most successful version.

Perhaps I should say that the D major clavier concerto is Bach's own transcription of his E major violin concerto. W.S.M.

BRAHMS. Symphony No. 3 in F major, Op. 90. Tragic Overture, Op. 81. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner.

R.C.A. RB16080 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

★R.C.A. Stereophonic SB2007 (12 in.,

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P.P.O., Boult
Berlin P.O., E. Jochum
V.P.O., Kubelik
Sudwestfunk Orch., Horenstein (6/58) PL1092
Philh., Klemperer
(6/58) 38CX1536
(6/58) 38CX1536

How do you prefer Brahms 3? You can have it powerful and classical, as in Klemperer, or powerful and romantic, as

in Jochum, or firmly balanced between the two as in Cantelli. Each of the twelve conductors named has his own slant on the Reiner's slant is that the two outside movements are fast, and the two inside movements are slow-really slow. That might seem axiomatic in a symphony but in this particular one most Brahmsians are agreed that the two middle movements should flow forward; there isn't an Adagio here. And there are elements of leisurely expressiveness in the outer movements that ask to be accommodated, though not necessarily at the expense of tempo preservation. Cantelli and Boult and Klemperer and Walter convey this view in their own ways. Reiner takes the first movement at the same speed as Walter, but doesn't communicate greatness in the music. In the second movement, which is Andante, he sets a steady slowish pace and then gets slower, so that the movement seems to go to sleep by the time the strings soar away into their coda tune. And so on, though less controversially. It's one view of the work, though not probably one that will appeal to whole-hearted Brahmsians.

The orchestral playing is full of beautiful sounds; no possibility that anyone could complain here about Brahms' orchestration; silken strings, jewelled woodwind, an excellent first horn. The sad viola tune before the coda of the finale is as beautifully balanced and presented as I ever heard it, and the mezza voce woodwind at the start of that movement have a veiled and insubstantial tone colour that sends a shiver down your spine. The climaxes in the first and last movements have a congested sound in the stereo version, but maybe they need a larger pair of speakers than I have; elsewhere the sound is marvellously W.S.M. solid and spacious.

(see also page 344)

BEETHOVEN. Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Guido Cantelli. H.M.V. ALP1472 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8\frac{1}{2}d. P.T.). Stereo: (10/58) ASD254.

BEETHOVEN. Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92. Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Philips GBR6524 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.).

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Cantelli's performance of this symphony has already appeared in stereo form and has, I notice, been generally reviewed in much the same terms—that it is a good performance but not of the master kind that he would probably have given had he lived to come to full maturity. This seems to me a fair estimate. It is a good performance, impeccably played and directed by a conductor who already knew the inside of the

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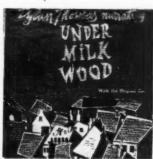
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score and got some way below the notes. But you have only to listen to Kleiber, Toscanini or Klemperer to discover the difference between a very good performance and an overwhelming one. This difference is not easy to put into words nor is this the place to try to do so. (It certainly isn't anything as simple as a right choice of speeds, for those chosen by the conductors named above vary enormously.)

But when you hear a bad performance of the work, as I am afraid Leinsdorf's is, the deficiencies can be expressed all too easily in words. A poor sense of rhythm: an indecision about the basic speed of a movement (especially of the first): a drawing out and sentimentalising of some phrases that is hopelessly out of style. Apart from the first movement, which is the worst, how trivial Leinsdorf makes the last pages of the slow movement sound. The scherzo is scrambled and not well played by what seems to be an orchestra scarcely of the calibre to which we are accustomed. The finale rushes ahead without true rhythm and power.

The recording shows thin string tone and lacks overwhelming sound at climaxes. My copy also had a great deal of background noise just before the vivace of the first movement. In short, if you want a reasonably priced version of this symphony, choose van Remoortel's (coupled with the 8th).

But every time one hears this, it should be a tremendous experience and for that you are more likely to be satisfied by Kleiber, Karajan, Toscanini, Klemperer or, possibly, Steinberg. I must also mention Georgescu's oddly attractive performance (admirably described by A.P. when it first appeared)-not one I should choose in the first place, but one I should enjoy owning as a change from some other.

*BRUCKNER. Symphony No. 5 in B flat major.

*WAGNER. Parsifal: Prelude and Good Friday Music. Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. D.G.G. Stereo-phonic SLPM138004-5 (two 12 in., 60s. plus 23s. 6d. P.T.).

Not so long ago one new issue of a Bruckner symphony a year would have seemed generous; now, in half a year, I have had three different symphonies of Bruckner to review. This new issue doesn't altogether duplicate the Decca/ Knappertsbusch one which M.M. reviewed in January 1957; first, because the D.G.G. is stereophonic, and second, because Jochum conducts the original uncut version of the

Stereophony is particularly beneficial to Bruckner, not only in his climaxes which 50 much depend on the entry of the heavy brass from behind wind and strings-an effect that the concert hall always had over the single-channel gramophone, and that we can now enjoy in our homes-but in his stretches of lively counterpoint which also sound more evocative when the polyphonic voices can be located, and make more effect when the ear can blend and separate them at will. I heard part of this set at a D.G.G. stereo demonstration a few weeks

ago, played through two big speakers in a room twice the size of mine; and I'm pleased to notice that it sounds just as impressive and easy on the ear through smaller equipment. The symphony was recorded in the Hercules Hall in Munich, evidently a large, resonant place with a high ceiling (to judge from the sound); and for an hour and a half my drawing room has been that hall, without a shadow of aural doubt. The recession of the orchestral textures is first-rate, and the pressings so good that one of the most eloquent effects is dead silence punctuated by a soft woodwind call or a plucked string. The brass of this fine orchestra makes a splendid noise in the Parsifal excerpts (a bit of pre-echo in the Prelude, though). The only loss that I noticed was the soft drum rolls in Bruckner's second movement (bar 26 and later

The question of editions is quite simple. Jochum plays what Bruckner wrote and never heard. Knappertsbusch plays the shorter version made by Franz Schalk (though it still takes three sides), with the brass choir separately disposed in the last movement chorale. Out-and-out Brucknerites will obviously want the D.G.G., though they may be impatient with Jochum's tempi in the first movement which change with each idea-he doesn't attain a real allegro until bar 261, the start of the development section. Newcomers to Bruckner may well think the shorter scherzo and finale an improvement; but I am not sure if this is a symphony for non-Brucknerites. It is an extremely personal work, and its tunes are less haunting than those of the fourth or eighth and ninth

The great things in it are sublime: the plodding slow introduction which returns in the finale; the cross-rhythms and astonishing diatonic clashes in the slow movement; the sweep of the scherzo, a giant of a movement; and the self-questioning start of the finale, when earlier themes return as in Beethoven's ninth; finally, the majestic chorale entries on brass choir; and the close structural integration, which contrives to pull four large movements into a single, perceptible experience.

The slow movement is interrupted in a silent bar for a side change; if the movements had been straddled over four sides, we wouldn't have had the fine Parsifal performances. W.S.M.

*CHOPIN. Les Sylphides—Ballet Suite.

*DELIBES. La Source—Ballet excerpts Paris Conservatoire Orchestra conducted by **Peter Maag.** Decca Stereophonic SXL2044 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 21d. P.T.). Monaural: (8/58) LXT5422.

R.F., reviewing the original of this stereo record, thought Maag's performance of Les Sylphides rather forceful and lacking in poetry, and added that the dancers wouldn't like some of his tempi. I report this, for I am myself no premier danseur and am glad to defer to his judgment. It is possible, however, that those who are not balletomanes may like performances of these Chopin pieces which dream less and have a bit of extra vivacity in them. I certainly enjoyed listening to this side of the record. as, indeed, I also did to La Source with its lilting tunes played in very attractive style.

The stereo sound is good, though I confess that, comparing it with the monaural record played on both speakers, the difference was little noticeable. But nobody with two speakers would presumably buy the monaural version and for them the stereo sound is confidently recommended.

CLARKE. Trumpet Voluntary (Trumpet solo: Harold Jackson).

GLUCK. Iphigénie en Aulide—Over-ture. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. Columbia SEL1595 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 31d. P.T.).

Gluck's overture to Iphigénie en Aulide leads straight into the opera, and both Mozart and Wagner provided it with a concert ending. On this record, side 1 consists of as much of the overture as Gluck actually wrote, with Wagner's completion occupying half side 2. There is thus a change-over of a type we seldom meet with these days. I suppose Kletzi is right to take the main middle part of the overture faster than the beginning and end; almost all conductors do. Nevertheless I should have thought Gluck would have marked a change of tempo if he had wanted one. The music can be played in one tempo from start to finish, and that is clearly how Wagner envisaged it.

The Clarke Trumpet Voluntary is the piece we used to know as by "Purcell, arr. Henry J. Wood". I looked in vain for Sir Henry's name on sleeve or label, and he ought to be there because there's a great deal more of him in this arrangement than either Purcell or Jeremiah Clarke (who, after all, wrote the thing for harpsichord). Woodwind replace the organ of the published version; Sir Henry always had woodwind manuscript parts for occasions when no organ was available. The old war-horse can still neigh lustily, and Harold Jackson makes a good job of the trumpet solo. My copy of the disc has rather a lot of surface noise, but otherwise the quality is reasonably R.F.

DELIBES. Lakmé-Ballet Music. VERDI. Otello-Ballet Music. Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden conducted by Charles Mackerras. H.M.V. 7EP7069 (7 in., 9s. 3d. plus 3s. 71d. P.T.).

Both these ballet suites smack of the Mysterious Orient, and without music or record labels one would be hard put to it to guess which was which. Lakmé is set in India, and Delibes envisaged the dancing girls much as Rimsky-Korsakov might have done; and very delightful they sound. The music is full of atmosphere and beautifully written. I thought the sinuous oboe solos in the third dance might have been played with more rubato, and for that matter, assurance, and, strictly speaking, this and the

following piece should have a chorus of but nevertheless I thoroughly enjoyed this music. The Otello ballet music on the other side was equally unfamiliar to me. It was the last theatre music Verdi wrote-for a Paris production in 1894, the year after Falstaff, and it was inserted in the middle of the "Trumpets Off" passage in Act 3 immediately before the arrival of the Venetian Ambassadors (page 256 in the vocal score). One would think that dramatically the result was disastrous. There are Turkish and Arab dances, a brief Invocation to Allah, a slow Greek dance and "La Muranese", presumably for Venetian girls. To be frank, Verdi did not take much trouble about any of this, and the music generally speaking has less character and individuality than the Lakmé dances. Nevertheless it is well worth playing once in a while for its deft touches of orchestration and the occasional touch of the master-hand. Apart from a momentary loss of slickness in the Greek Song, the playing is splendidly alive and exciting.

DVORAK. Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World". Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. H.M.V. ALP1623 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8\frac{1}{3}d. P.T.).

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I find it difficult to know what to say about yet another very acceptable record of the New World. You would expect the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra to play well. Of course Kempe will give a sympathetic and well-judged performance. You can guess that H.M.V. will have recorded it to good effect. And you will probably not be disappointed in any of these matters.

If you are easily irritated by a passing lapse of playing on a record, however slight, then the momentary bad unison of the horns in bar 4 may make you chalk up a small black mark, as may inexact tuning of a single note by flute and oboe in the finale. But these faults are obviously minute ones.

Kempe's view of the score is what one might call the conventional one: that is to say, lyrical and with a fairly wide range of speed variation, often not authorised by the composer. There is, for example, an enormous slowing down for the flute tune in the first movement. The majority of conductors do these things, I am afraid, though not all play the allegro melto of the first movement at so leisurely a basic speed as Kempe does. The only one who really sticks to Dvořák is Toscanini, and I myself am utterly convinced by his performance, though I know it is not popular everywhere.

Finally, the recording. Very good in general and with some particularly lovely things, like the noble brass sound at the start of the slow movement. Excellent recording, too, of the double-basses when they leave the 'cellos. The handling of the slow movement's climax is disappointing in that the violins tend to get lost: and two copies I tried both had a very faint pre-echo at the start of the Scherzo.

The faults are small indeed. Kempe's performance, with its lyrical first movement, its deeply felt Largo, excellently rhythmic Scherzo and lively Finale, should be heard, along with Kubelik's, to which it is similar in conception. Hearing Ormandy again I am rather less enthusiastic than I was, though it is undeniably good value at its cheaper cost. Toscanini's reading is, as I have said, in a class by itself. Horenstein's now sounds a little old and it would be a good idea if Vox got him to remake it, for his performance is one of the best. T.H.

GLINKA. Russlan and Ludmilla:
Overture. Bamberg Symphony
Orchestra conducted by Fritz
Lehmann.

TCHAIKOVSKY. Eugene Onegin: Waltz from Act 2. Bavarian State Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. D.G.G. EPL30020 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 84d. P.T.).

I would almost go so far as to say that any performance of the Russlan and Ludmilla overture that clocks more than five minutes is a good one. This one takes five minutes ten seconds, a quick but perfectly sane and musical speed. Some nice playing both here and in the Tchaikovsky waltz, where again there is no straining after superficial effect. The latter piece sounds unusually gentle, rather pleasantly so. The quality is satisfactory.

GLINKA. Orchestral Works. "Russlan and Ludmilla"—Overture. "A Life for the Czar"—Overture. Kamarinskaya, Jota Aragonesa. Valse Fantaisie. A Night in Madrid. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonel Perlea. Vox PL10600 (12 in., 30c plus 11. 9d. P.T.)

30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

This disc adds to the Glinka in the catalogues, though the Valse Fantaisie proves to be no more than pretty (and goes on overlong), while A Night in Madrid, better known, is only fairly entertaining. But the delightful and cleverly written Kamarinskaya (a fantasia on two Russian wedding tunes) is a far better piece and is welcome, for the only other version, Toscanini's, has now been deleted, while we also have here the only recording of the Overture to A Life for the Czar apart from that in the complete opera set. So there is quite a bit of special interest about the record.

Performances are perfectly respectable, but do not rise much above the efficient. Some touch of glitter and brilliance is missing. They are not helped by a recording which, while good in softer passages, often gets a bit shrill and coarse elsewhere. These scores offer many opportunities for "bringing up the woodwind", opportunities which, alas, are all too often taken (especially in the Russlan and Ludmilla Overture). This sort of music, much of it very third-rate but charming, wants a Beecham to bring out its charm. T.H.

GRIEG. Sigurd Jorsalfar, Op. 56:
Triumphal March. Wedding Day
at Troldhaugen, Op. 65, No. 6.
Bavarian Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Kurt Graunke.
D.G.G. EPL30093 (7 in., 12s. plus
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Grieg's creative genius was a frail flower, even though he could write music in a full-blooded style. These are both robust pieces; the Wedding Day one is really for piano, one of the Lyrie Pieces, Op. 65. A conductor like Beecham can reveal great character and charm in them; here they sound leaden and uninteresting, though they aren't badly played, and the sound is clean enough.

HAYDN. Salomon Symphonies—Volume One. No. 93 in D major; No. 94 in G major, "Surprise" (ALP1624): No. 95 in C minor; No. 96 in D major, "Miracle" (ALP1625): No. 97 in C major; No. 98 in B flat major (ALP1626).

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, Bart., C.H. H.M.V. ALP1624-6 (three 12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8\frac{1}{2}d. P.T. each).

There can be no doubt that Haydn regarded his visit to London in 1791 as a challenge. This was the richest capital in Europe, and although the public was perhaps not the most cultivated, it did at least take its music seriously. In all these six symphonies we can sense that Haydn was making a deliberate effort to impress the London audiences, both with brilliant and novel orchestration, and also with the emotional range of the music. Considering their musical richness, it is rather shocking that they are not better known today; of the present set only the two with nicknames are at all frequently heard-No. 94 (the Surprise) and No. 96 (the Miracle). And not merely are they rarely heard: until very recently they were never heard correctly. The modern editions are almost without exception appallingly faulty, omitting Haydn's phrasing and dynamics and ernaments and tempi, or else flatly contradicting them; and in quite a number of cases even the notes are wrong. Herculean labours of an American scholar, Mr. H. C. Robbins Landon, have clarified the situation a good deal. In his book, The Symphonies of Joseph Haydn (Universal Edition and Rockliff) he includes a list of errata for the Eulenburg miniature scores of the twelve "Salomon" symphonies; although inaccurate, these are the most nearly reliable current editions.

I mention this difficulty about the texts of the symphonics simply in order to make clear what it is that Sir Thomas Beecham



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has in fact done. He plays all these symphonies in uncorrected versions which differ in varying degrees from what Haydn wrote. In several cases his sheer musicianship has enabled him to supply nuances of phrasing or dynamics which Haydn did ask for but which have dropped out of all modern editions; in others he has introduced variants of his own which Haydn would surely have approved. But elsewhere the text has become too corrupt to be restored simply by intuition, however musical, and it is these points that make one regret the gulf that separates musicologists from practising musicians, particularly of the older generation. Against this we have to set Sir Thomas's other qualities, which compel forgiveness. There's just a touch of the chocolate-box in his interpretations of eighteenth-century music, of course, but only in some of the slow movements does this really matter. Elsewhere his acute ear for details of phrasing, rhythm and instrumental balance carry us wholeheartedly with him. This set is Haydn's triumph in the first place, but one can only be grateful that Beecham should lavish his immense gifts on music which far too many conductors neglect.

H.M.V. have done well by him, though not quite as well as they might. We happen to know the size of Haydn's London orchestra very precisely; the strings were 8, 8 (or 6, 6), 4, 5, 4. We wouldn't perhaps expect Beecham to limit himself to this extent, but the engineers could have achieved a little more of the clarity of balance that these forces must have given. As it is, there is a certain amount of mush in the tuttis, but in general the wind are clear enough, and certainly they play like

angels.

Here are a few notes on the individual symphonies: No. 93: A peculiar point occurs in the first movement: at bar 220 the bassoon entry is inaudible, and so it is on Beecham's earlier record of this symphony (Philips NBL5037). Is it the bassoonist, his part, or Sir Thomas who is responsible for this? In the second movement Havdn directed the first statement of the tune to be played by a solo quartetan imaginative stroke, but one we are not allowed to hear. The minuet is splendidly vigorous, but Beecham does not seem happy with the trio; his "effective" crescendo on the fanfares sounds fussy, and the final diminuendo too. The Philips disc likewise couples No. 93 with No. 94, and is moreover cheaper; on the other hand it has some rather conspicuous tape-joins, and a loud cough in the minuet. No. 94: This is by far the most familiar of these six symphonies, but Beecham manages to bring his usual attentive freshness to all of it except the slow movement, which is nothing like andante: in this movement too he makes an unnecessary change in the oboe variation. If I prefer Giulini's recent Columbia version (33CX1539) it is because he gives a slimmer, more youthful reading of this movement in particular. Krips, on Decca, is sound and straightforward but rather graceless. All recordings I have heard retain the howler in bar 7 of the minuet. No. 95: This is the last symphony Haydn

wrote in a minor key, and Robbins Landon detects symptoms of restlessness in it. It's true that Haydn doesn't maintain the tragic mood of the opening for very long, but there are some wonderful things in compensation. I find Beecham's reading of the slow movement too sophisticated; the music itself seems to call for greater simplicity. However the only possible rival to Beecham's version is that of Fricsay with the R.I.A.S. Orchestra on D.G.G. DGM18180, and although this is a beautifully elegant performance, the recording is rather cavernous. No. 96: Unfortunately Beecham here uses for the most part the uncharacteristic trumpet and drum parts supplied by some later editor in place of Haydn's own, but so does van Beinum on the only other recording of this symphony that bears comparison with the present one (Decca LW5317 or, coupled with No. 97, LXT2847). Both here and in No. 97 I find van Beinum's less mannered handlings of the slow movements more pleasing, but elsewhere there is little to choose between the two interpretations, and Beecham has the advantage of rounder string tone and a more clearly defined wind-section. No. 97: Here Beecham omits a couple of written-out repeats in the slow movement, which he might have felt like keeping if he had only adopted a slightly faster tempo. The witty false ending of the finale emerges rather too self-consciously for me, I prefer my jokes served up with a deader pan. On the other hand the festive first movement is played with immense gusto. No. 98: This is to my mind the finest of these six symphonies, and for that reason I'm all the more sorry not to be able to recommend any recorded version quite wholeheartedly. Here again the spurious trumpet and drum parts are used, but yet again the real weak spot is the slow movement, in which they remain silent. It has an almost Mozartian pathos (had Haydn heard of Mozart's recent death when he wrote it?) but this is spoilt by over-emphasis; for once even Beecham's rhythm becomes unsteady. But in this respect Fricsay's D.G.G. version is just as bad, and curiously sluggish in the other movements as well; moreover it is very soggily recorded, so Beecham holds the field.

My main regrets with this set can be summed up under two heads: incorrect versions of the scores and sentimentalised slow movements. These have to be seen in the context of continuously eloquent musicmaking such as hardly any other conductor, certainly no English one, could give us. Of course it would be pleasant if there were no debit column at all to the balance-sheet, but at any rate it seems clear to me that whatever sum total different critics may arrive at no one will want to write it in red. Gold would be a much more appropriate colour to symbolise the inexhaustible richness of Haydn's genius and Sir Thomas's incomparable musicality. look forward with the keenest anticipation to hearing the promised second set J.N. of "Salomon" symphonies.

CLASSICAL LP CATALOGUE - DECEMBER
A GUIDE TO CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

HINDEMITH. Concert Music for Piano, Brass and Harps, Op. 49. Concerto for Orchestra, Op. 38. Ballet Overture "Cupid and Psyche". Monique Haas (piano), Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Hindemith. D.G.G. DGM18474 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

This is an extremely valuable record for all those interested in the music of our time. Despite recent efforts to extend gramophone coverage of Hindemith (other than by duplication of his masterpiece Mathis der Maler), only a relatively small amount has been recorded of the (admittedly extensive) output of one of the most important composers of the twentieth century. The appearance of these three works, extremely well recorded and superbly played, offers an opportunity for a rapid survey of the development of his style. The Concerto for Orchestra, a virtuoso display piece performed with the utmost brilliance by the Berlin Phil., is a neo-Baroque work written in 1925 which shows off to perfection the tremendous vigour and contrapuntal energy-and the exuberance of texture-of his early period. Characteristic are the concerto grosso layout of the first movement (with solo oboe, bassoon and violin), the frenzied, orgiastic writing for the strings in the second movement, and the initial heading "Ohne Pathos und stets lebendig" (impersonal and always lively). Nowhere is there a trace of warmth of feeling-though this does not mean that the work is not very exhilarating just the same. The Concert Music for piano, brass and harps, written in 1930 (the sleeve note goes astray here, as it does in the case of the overture) and dedicated to that great patroness of music, Mrs. Elizabeth Coolidge, reveals a tempering of Hindemith's brashness. There is less reliance on motor energy and more sense of relaxation and serenity; and there is a most imaginative second movement in variation form which depends entirely on the interplay of the tone colours of the piano and harps. By 1943, when Cupid and Psyche was written, Hindemith had considerably mellowed and become more philosophic and humane: the clarity and relative simplicity of texture, and the more expressive quality, are in striking contrast to his style of twenty years earlier. I warmly recommend this disc. L.S.

LISZT. Symphonic Poems. Les Préludes: Tasso. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constantin Silvestri. H.M.V. ALP1648 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

The acquisition here is Tasso, not otherwise available in the U.K. catalogues, a tone poem written in 1849 when Germany was celebrating the centenary of Goethe's birth, a piece both powerful and imaginative, and only falling into emptiness in its very last pages. Silvestri gives it a magnificent performance, using his remarkable imagination very much to the advantage of the music. Liszt, on this evidence, seems to be a composer to whom this conductor is much suited.

One would wish that the companion piece were something a little less hack-

neyed than Les Préludes, well as it is played. But I suppose the idea is to catch both those who will rush for a Silvestri performance of a popular work as well as the Lisztians, who will go for Tasso, whatever else may be on the record.

Powerful, exciting performances, very well recorded.

MASSENET. Le Cid-Ballet. MEYERBEER. Les Patineurs-Philharmonic Israel Ballet. Orchestra conducted by Jean

Decca LXT5456 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 21d. P.T.).

★Decca Stereophonic SXL2021 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 21d. P.T.).

This replaces the Decca/Irving coupling which retires after six years' honourable service. But of course each of the two suites is variously available in other mono performances.

Both suites make good vehicles for a dapper orchestra, which the Israel Phil. undoubtedly is; the sound is warm and full of guts-whistling piccolos pierce crisp morning snows, trumpets and horns cut through the texture (or blend opulently into it) with remarkable clarity and boldness, strings pour out effortless, luxurious melody. There's a thrilling crescendo entry for castanets in Massenet's Madrilène. Just the thing for stereo of course, and very enjoyable on single-channel too. Martinon, aptly chosen for both suites, makes the music sit up and look smart, but also finds its qualities of heart-if you doubt that Meyerbeer is a composer with a heart, then listen to the Prayer from L'Etoile du Nord, played as a pas de deux here, and admittedly transcribed by Constant Lambert who had plenty of heart; the melody flows like rich, aromatic honey, and tugs upwards in its

The brass and string attack sound even better in the stereo version, and I was struck, almost literally, by some timpani thwacks in the opening number of Les Patineurs. The string tone is some of the best I've heard W.S.M. from Decca.

MENDELSSOHN. A Midsummer Night's Dream. Overture, Op. 21, and Incidental Music, Op. 61 excerpts. Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by George Szell. Philips GBR6515 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.).

On one side the overture; on the other, Scherzo, Nocturne and Wedding March. Expert, cleanly articulated performances, perhaps a shade brisk and virile at times, but this is a good fault, and the playing is mostly superb. The development section of the overture sounds as magical as it should, with all the queer unearthly night noises exactly calculated-and what a marvellous piece of composing. By the second episode in the Wedding March I found myself wondering if I had ever heard the thing thus far before, it all sounded so unfamiliar. The scherzo is especially well played, with wonderful precision from the woodwind. The horn is pushed along at a rather undream-like tempo in the Nocturne, but at

the end of the overture Szell relaxes and the final violin phrases float magically over Theseus's sleeping palace. The recorded quality is outstanding, and altogether this is a very good disc.

MOZART. Piano Concertos: No. 13 in C major, K.415; No. 24 in C minor, K.491. Ingrid Haebler (piano), Pro Musica Orchestra, Vienna, conducted by Paul Walter. Vox PL10080 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d.

Concerto No. 13:
Katchen, N.S.O., Maag
Concerto No. 24:
Curzon, L.S.O., Krips
Casadesus, Orch., Szell
Solomon, Philh., Menges
Bachauer, London Orch., Sche (5/56) LXT5145 (4/54) LXT2867 (8/55) ABL3060 (1/56) ALP1316 erman (9/56) DLP1124 Kirkpatrick, Orch., G. Jones Henkemans, V.S.O., Moralt Gieseking, Philh., Karajan (7/57) ALP1454 (2/58) ABL3178 (5/58) 33CX1526

This is one of Miss Haebler's most successful records, and although I don't think she gives us the best available version of these concertos both are nevertheless quite acceptable. Her playing is pearly and immaculate but just a little dull, particularly in the comparatively early C major concerto. Here Katchen and Maag give altogether more of a performance, although it's arguable that Katchen may put just a little too much of himself into this unassuming music. The C minor concerto on the other side seems to excite Miss Haebler's imagination more, and she plays with greater expressiveness. The orchestra is better balanced with the piano than in some of Vox's other records of Mozart piano concertos: the wind in particular are clear, even if the strings are a little unfocused. The playing, however, is not really in the same class as that of the Philharmonia on Solomon's or Gieseking's versions of this concerto. J.N.

MOZART. Serenade No. 13 in G K.525, "Eine major, kleine Nachtmusik".

SCHUBERT. Rosamunde, Op. 26: Overture; Ballet Music No. 2; Entr'acte No. 2. Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. Philips GBR6513 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.).

Most conductors use an orchestra of moderate size for performances of Mozart's Eine kleine Nachtmusik, and though it might reasonably be argued that it's the Night-Music that was small and not the orchestra, musicians generally agree about the desirability of having fewer strings for a serenade than for a symphony. Bruno Walter directs this music with his usual skill and sympathy, but the sound is too heavy and blown-up for my personal liking. The recording however is of good quality, and there is just sufficient reverberation to keep the sound alive after a final chord. It is already well-known to collectors in its previous couplings, ABL3118 and ABE10023.

The Schubert extracts from Rosamunde are delightfully played, apart from a somewhat uncertain start to the Overture. Walter's tempi in the Ballet Music and the Entr'acte are as perfect as one could wish, and the orchestra by then is in excellent form. DS

RAVEL. Tzigane. SAINT - SAENS. Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28. Isaac Stern (violin), Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Fontana CFE15012 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 31d. P.T.).

Tzigane isn't one of Ravel's most meritorious works, but it is a tour de force with its smouldering initial solo, and the harp entry after what seems like about ten minutes brings a definite thrill with it. It's had some distinguished gramophone exponents (I reviewed one last month); Stern plays it effectively, with feeling as well as expertise, and the Philadelphia sounds suitably evocative in the background. Other people do this sort of thing as competently-Stern is outstanding in his own field of classical

But this is a convenient and economical way of buying Tzigane, and the same goes for Saint-Saëns' Rondo; both have until now been ten-inch MP or LP material, and usually included in recital discs. The Rondo is delightfully done. A worth-while issue, and W.S.M. good value.

Overtures. The Silken Tancredi. Vienna Sym-ROSSINI. Ladder. phony Orchestra conducted by Francesco Molinari - Pradelli. Philips ABE10076 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 31d. P.T.).

ROSSINI. Overtures. The Thieving Magpie: The Journey to Rheims: Il Signor Bruschino: The Barber of Seville: Semiramide. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Molinari - Pradelli. Francesco Philips GBR6522 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.).

Each record opens well: The Silken Ladder with a massive string attack on their scale (how very appropriate: did Rossini do it on purpose?); The Thieving Magpie with foreboding side drums for once allowed to be audible throughout the introduction. And each record continues well, for that matter; for Molinari-Pradelli does allow nearly every point to Rossini's sparkling music, adding extra percussion to Tancredi and somehow getting a strong and unanimous tap-on-desk from the always reluctant fiddle-bows in Il Signor Bruschinoso strong indeed (I will not say so unanimous!) that I would guess it not to emanate from the string-players at all. One unhappiness obtrudes, particularly in Semiramide: the enchanting new meaning Rossini gave to the classical "second subject"—a loud half-close, a bar's silence, some softstring chug-chugs, and then a tune from the Top Ten of the day for woodwind or horn solo-is obscured by the conductor's insistence on slowing up at this point.

Yet on balance the orchestra gives rather better than routine performances of all the overtures, and the recording is good throughout. There is no music here quite new to the catalogues, but either or both discs may well contribute to solving coupling difficulties, wildly rampant in this particular field. M.M.

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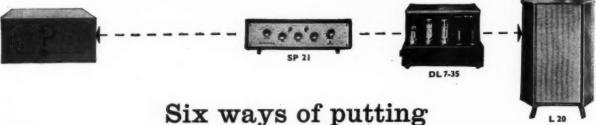
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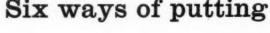
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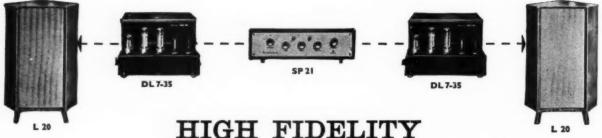
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SCHUBERT. Rosamunde, Op.26.
Entr'acte No. 1; Ballet Music No. 2.
Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by George Szell. Philips
ABE10079 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 34d.
P.T.).

The Amsterdam Concertgebouw (where I assume this was recorded) has a splendidly spacious acoustic, but this time I fear the engineers have picked up a trifle too much resonance, with the result that this simple Schubertian selection appears to be "blown up" in a rather unfortunate way. The playing is good enough, however, and if you happen to like just these items and admire Szell, you will not regret your choice.

D.S.

SCHUMANN. 'Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129. Mstislav Rostropovitch ('cello), Moscow State Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra conducted by S. Samosud.

SHOSTAKOVITCH. 'Cello Sonata, Op. 40. Mstislav Rostropovitch ('cello), Dimitri Shostakovitch (piano). Parlophone PMA1043 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

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Schumann 'Cello Concerto:
Gendron, Suisse, Ansermet (3/54) LXT2895
Casals, Prades Festival (7/55) ABR4035
Mainardi, Berlin R.I.A.S., Lehmann (9/56) DGM18222
Fournier, Philih., Sargent (2/57) 33CX 1407
Cassado, Bamberg S.O., Perlea (6/58) PL10210

Shostakovitch 'Cello Sonata: Brabec, Holetschek (1/54) LW506 Shafran, Shostakovitch (9/58) LPM30

I wish it were possible to greet this latest concerto from Rostropovitch with the same enthusiasm generally felt for his Dvořák and Miaskovsky. Unfortunately, neither in interpretation nor in recording is this in the same class, and the best available performances of the Schumann remain those by Gendron, even if the orchestral sound is rather lacking in brilliance, and Fournier, if you can accept his very leisurely tempo for the first movement, which is Nicht schnell rather than Schumann's Nicht zu schnell. Rostropovitch starts off at a good pace, but pulls the tempo about a great deal as the movement progresses the Langsam is dragged to a quite painful degree, and the finale is on the ponderous side. (I am not at all sure that I like this way of starting extremely slowly after the cadenza-where the marking is actually In tempo-and gradually speeding up.) The orchestral strings sound rough, particularly in the off-beat triplet figures in the first movement, and the tutti passages some of which I suspect have been turned up in volume) are none too subtly played. I cannot agree with Samosud in making the first string entry, in bar 4, a forte diminuendo, when surely the composer's intention is to let a murmurous background steal in. The recording generally is rather shallow, making the whole thing sound less warm and sensuous (despite Rostropovitch's fine tone) than in the Fournier version, and the microphone placing irritatingly forces on our notice every intake of breath by the soloist.

Interest in the Shostakovitch sonata will rather depend on whether you agree with

Gerald Abraham that it is one of the best things the composer has ever written, or whether, like Andrew Porter, you regard it as trivial and uninventive. In any case, though the fact that the composer is at the piano will obviously be an attraction, it must regretfully be said that as a recording this is by far the least satisfactory of the three versions now available. apparently been made in an empty cavernous studio, the thin, weak-bassed piano tone booming out from the distance, fortissimos ring round the room, building up mush, and the percussive piano tone makes nonsense of any espressivo melodic lines (e.g., in the second subject of the opening Moderato). All this is the more the pity since the actual playing is very good, the Scherzo in particular having real bite (how splendidly Rostropovitch manages those glissando arpeggios!) and since neither of the previous versions can be recommended without reservation. Brabec's performance was notable for his beautiful, most seductive tone, but the piano was indifferently balanced, and both the Scherzo and the finale were a good deal too tame. There was better balance between the instruments, more fantasy in the Scherzo and a gayer finale in the Shafran version, but the Largo was dragged, and the recording as a whole badly lacked depth. You pays your money and you takes your choice. L.S.

*STRAUSS, RICHARD. Also Sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. D.G.G. Stereophonic SLPEM136001 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Exactly what it was that Zarathustra was saying at such aggressive length I have never come even moderately near to understanding (reserving a private conviction that Zarathustra did not in any event come appreciably nearer himself). Strauss's music, too, is not far behind Nietzsche in complexity, and even if its bombast and glue seem no more artistically rewarding with the years, it remains a score which can enjoyably exercise to its limits the skill of orchestral players and recording engineers alike.

In this new D.G.G. recording both sets of contributors cover themselves with glory. There is no trumpet-call which sounds less than heraldic, no emotional solo string passage which sounds less than foam-rubbered. The flourish which Karl Böhm persuades the Berlin Philharmonic into giving to the tirades is stupendous, so, too, are the delicacy of the twitterings and the lilt, even of the waltz section (a virtue, though, which surely would have aroused the contempt of Nietzsche's superman?).

The engineers tackle their many problems no less successfully. Strauss sets them, indeed, every problem in the book in turn the loudest chord of C major in music, strings seemingly permanently divided into fifty-seven parts with the tune somewhere in the middle, large bells, three simultaneous strands of counterpoint all lying below viola C, ff chords for the full organ: to emerge safely from all this is to achieve, as D.G.G. have done, something of a triumph in recording. The overall tone, too, is splendid, and the turnover point well chosen—better than in either of the monaural versions of the work available.

The distaste I happen to feel for the music remains substantial, but this version of it is unquestionably an entirely first-class one. It is recommendable without qualification to all supermen who have successfully managed to enslave stereo.

M.M.

STRAUSS, RICHARD. Alpine Symphony, Op. 64. Saxon State Orchestra, Dresden conducted by Karl Böhm. D.G.G. DGM18476 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

I remember calling down sundry un-pleasant murrains on D.S. for his review of the previous Nixa-Westminster LP of Strauss's Alpine Symphony (3/55-now deleted.). It all depends on what music means to you. If music is to be nothing less than a house furnished in exquisite period taste, so exquisite that you hardly dare sit down (and if you do the chair is so uncomfortable that you get up immediately) well perhaps the Alpine Symphony is not for you, and nor is Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, or the music of Vaughan Williams, or Berlioz, or many another master who fell sometimes short of absolute, sybaritic perfection. But if music is for you a form of living, as it is for me, then there is room for music that uplifts you or simply makes you feel happier by its sheer élan and imagination. The Alpine Symphony is one of many works that fall into this category.

In 1911, after the first performance of Der Rosenkavalier Strauss had written to his librettist Hofmannsthal that he never wanted to write a symphonic work again, two months later he had one in his head. In 1915 he completed his Alpine Symphony "in 100 days", under the impact of going to live in Garmisch at the foot of the great Zugspitze and surrounded by other Bavarian Alps. In form it follows the scheme of Heldenleben and the Domestic Symphony, rather than the earlier symphonic poems, it is longer and more like a symphony, but unlike them it is not in four movements, the coherence is subcutaneous-on the surface it is a musical travelogue-though musically speaking a few themes are its developable substance. It starts and ends with the setting sun-a B flat minor chord cluster slowly built down-and in between comes the expedition up the airy mountain: we tramp upwards, hear distant hunters, go through forests, past a waterfall, past grazing cows on to a glacier where dangerous falls are only just avoided, up to the top, then down again in mist and thunder. The themes are very Straussy, though two of the most important come from Tristan und Isolde and Bruch's G minor Violin Concerto, and there are other bits of Sibelius, Beethoven, and Richard Strauss himself. The scoring is very involved and thick, a headache to the recording engineer and musical supervisor, but one hundred per cent masterful. In concert performance the work sounds

terrific, so long as you like the sort of music Strauss makes.

It's the greatest shame that Clemens Krauss and Decca didn't include the Alpine Symphony in their Strauss series. Böhm is a keen and renowned Straussian, but he doesn't get the right sonority on to disc: the sound is warm and full, but all the important counterpoint doesn't tell, and the climaxes are sheer push without definition. Structurally, too, he misses the impact of the climax at the achievement of the summit, and the excitement of the glacier and the storm. The water scene, and the pseudo-Ariadne music of the woodland episode, and all the more thinly scored passages sound well from the orchestra and engineers alike. The Dresden Orchestra, which gave the first performance, plays the symphony well but not outstandingly; most of the solos are good-particularly flute, clarinet and trom-It must be a nightmare to put on record, and the present result, though by no means ideal, warrants thanks, if not effusive ones. The turnover is done with a clean break when the travellers are on the summit. A decent record for the student who can look at the score and fill in what isn't audible; it will probably sound better on stereo; but another version, if ever forthcoming, could well present the score more clearly. W.S.M.

STRAVINSKY. (a) Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra. (b) Concerto for Two Pianos. (a) Charlotte Zelka, with Sudwestfunk Orchestra, Baden-Baden, conducted by Harold Byrns; (b) Charlotte Zelka and Alfred Brendel. Vox PL10660 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

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Capriccio:
Magaloff, Suisse, Ansermet
Magaloff, Suisse, Ansermet
(10/56) LXT5154
Haas, Berlin R.I.A.S., Fricsay
(12/56) DGM18004
(8/58) CLP1182

I like this record rather less than Harold Schonberg (Letter from America, last August) did: but Stravinsky's Concerto for Two Solo Pianos is an important addition to the catalogues. It was written in 1935, for the composer and his son Sviatoslav Sulima. Eric Walter White describes it as:

"An imposing full-scale work. Its first movement is forceful and dynamic; the Nocturne, delicate and highly ornamental; the Variations, ingenious; and every contrapuntal resource is brought to play in the final movement". I quote this Stravinsky expert's opinion rather than venture my own at any length; for although Mr. White also deems it "one of the most easily accessible works of Stravinsky's later period" I have never been able to appreciate it as I feel I should. The performance on this record is highly proficient, and rhythmically vigorous; but the players do not coax such charm as there is out of the music. Forceful and dynamic they certainly are, but both the Nocturne and the Variations can sound more attractive than they do here. By modern standards the recording is moderate, not excellent.

In the Capriccio, which is, by any count, an approachable work, the recorded sound becomes tiring. The acoustic effect is as of a small, empty room, and the players, although they are keen and precise, tend to keep at one dynamic. It was with something of relief that I went back to the Magaloff/Ansermet version (backed by the Stravinsky Piano and Winds Concerto).

★STRAVINSKY. The Firebird—Complete Ballet. Suisse Romande Orchestra conducted by Ernest Ansermet. Decca Stereophonic SXL2017 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

STRAVINSKY. The Firebird—Ballet Suite. The Song of the Nightingale. Berlin R.I.A.S. Orchestra conducted by Lorin Maazel. (D.G.G. Stereophonic SLPM138006 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Ansermet's Firebird is well-known. It sounds brilliant in stereo form. But for those who do not especially want the whole of the ballet, the new D.G.G. disc of the (1919) suite, coupled to the Song of the Nightingale, is an attractive proposition. So far as the sound of the orchestra goes, the D.G.G. yields nothing to the Decca; in fact it is possibly better-though one is on a plane where distinctions are fine. The differences between orchestras are going to emerge more clearly in stereo than they did before; and the Berlin players seem to be more virtuosic, and possess keener, more brilliant tones than the Swiss ones. On the other hand Ansermet's men do respond to his reading like the trained instrumentalists they are. Sometimes Lorin Maazel's interpretation strikes me as a shade selfconscious, almost precious-particularly in the slower sections. But there is some bewitching playing here, and even more in the kaleidoscopic, entrancing Song of the Nightingale. The recording could hardly be bettered, so far as the sound of the instruments goes. All that bothers me is a certain amount of background noise which is perceptible in the quietest passages; and, in The Firebird, some faint, distant, heavy thumps as if neighbours were banging mildly on the wall. These are not serious A.P.

★STRAVINSKY. Rite of Spring. Paris Conservatoire Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. R.C.A. Stereophonic SB2005 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.). Monaural: (7/57) RB16007.

This is superb stereophonic sound, so good that I found I was listening blissfully unconscious of two loudspeakers and only enjoying a performance even more vivid than the several very good monaural versions of recent years. Of stereophony in the crude sense of sound coming from here and there, there is almost none: or, to be more precise, it is all so naturally balanced that I noticed any placing of instruments no more than I would at any symphony concert. What I did enjoy was a sound of far greater spread than a monaural record can provide, admirably centred between the speakers. How much Le Sacre benefits from this, everyone who knows the music will

appreciate. This wonderful score works its spell with renewed and increased powers

Nothing need be repeated about Monteux's fine and authoritative performance, already fully reviewed when its monaural recording appeared. And I am glad that R.C.A. have kept the entertaining sleeve note by Monteux himself, as well as the reproduction of an Henri Rousseau painting. This issue is recommended without any reservation whatever.

TCHAIKOVSKY. Swan Lake, Op. 20— Ballet excerpts. Yehudi Menuhin (violin), Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Efrem Kurtz. H.M.V. ALP1644 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

"The naming of cats", wrote T. S. Eliot, "is a difficult matter"-but not half so hard as the numbering of the movements in Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake. In The Record Guide we talked about Charting the Lake, and even tried to do so; but our chart, though comprehensive at the time, is no longer accurate because other numbers have crept back into the repertory. I say crept back and had better explain myself. Tchaikovsky wrote Swan Lake for a production that was a flop. When Petipa revived it after the composer's death much of the music was reorganised, rescored and even added to as well as taken away; this score is the one that ballet-goers in England know, and that is referred to in our Ouarterly Classical Catalogue which follows the available Novello piano score. For the complete score you have to go to the Mercury records conducted by Dorati, and these use the Tchaikovsky Foundation score which is numbered differently because the pieces occur in a different order.

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I mention all this because the record under review uses the big score and includes various bits of which the Novello score (and the Royal Ballet) is ignorant—or should I say innocent? One of these is the Russian Dance from Act 3, a fine A minor movement with a splendid violin solo; another is—but perhaps I'd better list the contents:

First, the Prelude to the ballet, which doesn't have a number, but is what balletgoers know; here it is slow by Covent Garden standards, but rather expressive: the percussion at the climax is fierce. This is supposed to end with attacca No. 1, but as that isn't included here the movement ends with raised eyebrows miles out in some musical desert. Then followed the famous Valse (No. 2 in the pukkah score) which used to be played as the overture to Act 3, and is now danced at Covent Garden as a has de six with new choreography by Ashton. Here, if you know the Royal Ballet production, you will find the pace fast, and will notice a lot of repeats that are new (unless you have the Dorati records). This is because we generally hear Tchaikovsky's music in a contracted version (blame Petipa), which abbreviates every movement and prevents one from appreciating Tchaikovsky's grasp of musical form in ballet music. The sound of the orchestra is extremely well defined all the way through, and the tunes are enunciated in a most

1953 dapper fashion; Kurtz really understands ork: its the style of the music, even though you may think his tempi unsuited for dancing-well, anyhow, a record isn't designed expressly for dancing, and if it sounds well, the music is right for listening purposes (but more later about that).

Next comes the Pas de trois from Act 1; this consists of six numbers here and includes the first variation in G minor which isn't usually heard—very pretty it is too. What is the famous Black Swan Pas de deux doing next? We know it from Act 3, but here it is after the Pas de trois. The answer is that it properly belongs in Act 1, as a waltz and variations for sundry peasants, and its correct position is No. 5, so it is in order here. The waltz is played with all repeatsit sounds much better this way too—and then comes the first of Yehudi Menuhin's contributions at the second part of the Intrada, which we associate wrongly with the whispered conversations of Odile and Rothbart. The section, marked Andante, is taken very slowly, but with Menuhin's sensuous tone and luxurious rubato it all makes a marvellously heady effect; in particular, his care for phrasing is all benefit. Why bother to engage a crack violinist for these solos? The precedent is unimpeachable: at the first production Leopold Auer played them, and when Diaghilev revived the ballet he engaged Mischa Elman; Campoli was brought in for Fistoulari's Decca set—do I have to go on? The proof of the one-upmanship is in the playing; listen to it. The Andante leads directly into another number, sometimes played as the man's solo and called Polka, though with different scoring and a different coda. Next the standard third section male solo, another waltz; here the cornet is very discreet and the accompaniment exceptionally lilting. The lady's variation is omitted (it is by Drigo), and the music leads directly into the famous 32-fouetté finale, which again is given in a fuller version than usual.

Now Kurtz's suite steps off on a different foot into Act 2. The celebrated Swan theme (No. 10), slow and meditative; the valse for the corps de ballet (No. 13a); the E flat solo for Odette (No. 13d); and the Cygnets' Dance (No. 13b-the initial phrasing is more spry than usual). Then, very slow, I think too slow, the great Adagio in G flat with violin solo; old records used to call it the Swan Queen's Second Dance, though in the popular version it came first. But in Tchaikovsky's original score it really is her second dance, and is so placed here; and slow or not, this is where Menuhin's playing does make you sit up and listen hard, to his phrasing and expression, and his run-ups (which are taken after the beat, not on it, as some violinists ineffectively do). This number is slightly longer than usual, with a different coda.

The suite ends with the Hungarian Dance (No. 20), whose first part is taken very slowly indeed, so that the ratio of Lassu and Friss is twice the normal one; and then the Russian Dance—what's that? I mentioned it earlier, and it isn't done by the Royal Ballet; it derives from one of Tchaikovsky's piano pieces, and is very worth while,

particularly when Menuhin is playing the solo. Funny, you don't connect Menuhin with Tchaikovsky, but in these solos he's perfectly cast.

This, then, is no more a standard abbreviated Swan Lake than Stokowski's record is. For one record of standard favourites go to Irving, or the R.C.A. or Philips versions. The new H.M.V. is more specialised, but also more stylish and more attractively played. Don't try to dance to it, W.S.M. but do listen to it.

TCHAIKOVSKY. Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Thomas Schippers. Columbia 33CX1609 Schippers.

Schippers. Columbia 33CX1609
(12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).
V.P.O., Furtwängler
Chicago S.O., Kubelik
Belrian Radio Orch., Andre
Philharmonia, Karajan
Philharmonia, Malko
Berlin R.I.A.S., Fricsay
Suisse, Argenta
Leningrad P.O., Sanderling
Boston S.O., Munch
Philharmonia, Silvestri
Concertgebouw, Dorati
Hallé, Barbirolli
Diumbia gayee Schippers'
12(52) ALP1035
(12(58) DGM18393
(4/88) CCL30116

Columbia gave Schippers' recent version of Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony the benefit of excellent recording, and this record is, if anything, even better from that point of view. I have no hesitation at all in saying that this is the most vividly recorded version of Tchaikovsky's Fourth available-even more brilliant than those by Argenta, Silvestri and Barbirolli. There is one fault, though a minor one: the scherzo has been recorded, or at any rate put on the disc, at too low a level-if you adjust it by turning up the volume you have to be careful to turn it down again before the big bang that begins the finale, otherwise you're likely to break a window or two.

I've mentioned the quality of the recording straightaway, because I'm sure that for many people this is the crucial matter. Others may agree with me in finding that vividness is not just a matter of recording, and deciding that one of the earlier versions is still preferable. Not that Schippers does not secure a very good performance from the Philharmonia: the louder and more brilliant sections are very stirring on the whole. But in the quiet passages-the beginning of the waltz theme in the first movement, the quasi andante section with the liquid woodwind scales, the "folk-song" in the slow movement, the second subject of the finale-it is here that we miss the rhythmic subtlety of an old hand like Sanderling or Karajan. Schippers doesn't seem to feel the need for that barely perceptible preparation that gives a climax its full weight, or to realise that a quiet passage may need even more rhythmic control than a loud one if it is not to go soggy. Perhaps he may feel scruples about taking liberties with the score, but the sort of thing that I have in mind is so much a part of Tchaikovsky's orchestral language that not to do it is the greater liberty. At any rate this is a sound, vigorous performance, and certainly it has all the brilliance that magnificent playing and recording can

TCHAIKOVSKY. Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74, "Pathétique". Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. Fontana CFL1019 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d.

Vienna P.O., Karajan (1/53) 33CX1026
Philharmonia, Cantelli (6/53) ALP1042
Paris Cons., Kleiber (5/54) (R) LX75370
Concertgebouw, Kempen (1/55) (R) ABL3127
Hamburg R.O., Schmidt-Issentedt (2/55) LGX66031

Berlin P.O., Fricsay (2) New York Stadium S.O., Bernstein

New York Stadium S.O., Bernstein
(3/55) AXTL1068
Leningrad P.O., Mravinsky
Chicago S.O., Kubelik
Suisse, Ansermet
Philharmonia, Silvestri
Philharmonia, Kempe
Berlin P.O., Markevitch
(1/68) ALP1696
Berlin P.O., Markevitch
(1/68) ALP1696
Of course this performance has its merits,

but when I contemplate the list of its predecessors I have to report that it does not nearly equal the best of them. Dorati is not up to Mravinsky, Silvestri, Kempe or Markevitch in this work: the Vienna Symphony Orchestra is apparently not the equal of those conductors' orchestras: nor has the recording that full, rich sound that the best of the others give us, though its climaxes are impressive.

At the start I was not much taken with the inexpressive bassoon playing and later on the clarinet gentleman should really not take such noisy breaths, for they do spoil his quiet moments. Violin tone is not warm enough (nor quiet enough) for such lovely moments as the final return of the first movement's great tune.

As to Dorati's reading, it has vivacity and some very exciting climaxes, but the hurried and graceless playing of the 5/4 movement gave me no pleasure at all, nor did I enjoy the rather heavy string playing in the third movement-at its start, for

I ought, I know, to be writing more about the record's qualities. But in face of that list above it seems only necessary to give some indication of why I do not think this is an issue to be reckoned with.

★TCHAIKOVSKY. Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35. Alfredo Campoli (violin), London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ataulfo Argenta. Decca Stereophonic SXL2029 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 21d. P.T.). Monaural: (6/57) LXT5313. Heifetz, Chicago S.O., Reiner

When I compared the stereo and monaural versions of Heifetz's performance of this concerto a month or two ago, the thing that chiefly struck me was that the violin tone was decidedly rounder and more beautiful on the monaural disc. Comparison of the two versions of Campoli's performance shows no such difference, the sound of the solo violin being equally good, perhaps even better on the stereo record. The performance itself was warmly praised when it first appeared and its stereo reproduction is pure gain.

Campoli's only stereo rival at the moment is Heifetz. Both give wonderfully accom-plished performances, Heifetz astonishing us here and Campoli there. But, virtuosity apart, there is a world of difference between

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Record e Lake, chart, , is no ers have y crept myself. a pro-Petipa h much red and

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rchestra is y through, n a most the two interpretations. To help you to decide which you prefer, I suggest that you will find the basic difference in the first minute or so of the soloists' very first entry and whichever you prefer then, you will probably continue to prefer.

Heifetz moves ahead more. His playing is in no way lacking in affection but, nevertheless, things move on. Campoli allows himself that touch of lingering here, of Viennese Liebesleid there, which, allied with an easier-going movement, make for a very different reading.

Both artists are well recorded, Campoli less on top of a microphone than Heifetz. So it comes back to a choice based on the temperaments of these two great players and I hope that my suggestion of what to sample in your record shop will help you to decide.

T.H.

★TCHAIKOVSKY. Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23. Van Cliburn (piano), with orchestra conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. R.C.A. Stereophonic SB2006 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.). Monaural: (8/58) RB16073.

Van Cliburn's performance of the Tchaikovsky has won universal praise on account of its musicality as well as its technical accomplishment, and Kondrashin proves himself an excellent partner. In the monaural version of this recording it was really only the quality of sound which was not wholly successful, a clang in the piano tone proving difficult to deal with without unduly dampening the orchestra. In the new stereo version the same defect obtrudes, and, unexpectedly, there seems to be no easing of the congestion of the orchestral tone at climaxes. This concerto will surely one day drown our rooms in a glorious flood of sound; but somehow the right source still manages to escape us. M.M.

★VIVALDI. The Four Seasons. Werner Krotzinger (violin), Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. Decca Stereophonic SXL2019 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 23d. P.T.).

This is the ninth LP recording of The Four Seasons! But the first in "stereo" form. The new kind of recording-to judge by this and Klemperer's Handel/Mozart disc -is particularly favourable to string orchestras. The sound of this Decca is so good, so lifelike, that I reckon that sooner than I expected I shall join the band who find "monaural" high fidelity old-fashioned. The Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra was the first to bring The Four Seasons before the gramophone public, in 1951. Reinhold Barchet was soloist (later Barchet recorded the work again, for Vox). Werner Krotzinger, soloist of the new performance, is not so expressive a player. He is clean, in tune, firm of tone, and rhythmically exact, but does not bring any very strong personality to his interpretation. general, Münchinger settles for a rather deliberate performance. The peasants of Autumn celebrate at a staid tempo; and

when their drunken sleep is over, they set out a-hunting at so steady, so Ländler-like a gait, that the effect is slightly comicalalmost as if Peter's Wolf were their quarry. I imagine, though perhaps wrongly, that Vivaldi had something more picturesque, more energetic, in mind. The opening of Winter, with the strings chattering of cold, also strikes me as rather slow-though the Skating Scene, with its wild slips and skids and bumps to the ground, is vividly realized. In the slow movement of Spring the barking dog is hardly heard to bark at all, the viola part is marked sempre f, si devi suonare sempre molto forte e strappato, but it is played quite gently.

Yet this is a very clear and very enjoyable performance. The birdsong, the forest murmurs, and the diverse storms all come off well. There is no taking The Four Seasons for granted. I must have heard it some twenty times—most recently, under the stars at the Menton Festival—and marvelled every time at the genius, diversity and startling invention which Vivaldi displayed here—foreshadowing Gluck, Beethoven, Wagner and Richard Strauss. Try to get hold of the scores (published by Ricordi), for even the best of sleeve-notes can only hint at the complexity and finesse of the musical illustration. A.P.

VIVALDI. Concerto for 'Cello, Strings and Continuo in C minor, P.434. Concerto alla Rustica for Strings and Continuo in G major, P.143 (both revised Giuranna). I Musici with Enzo Altobelli ('cello). Philips ABE10064 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 34d. P.T.).

Both of these concertos have appeared on disc before, but not in versions as smoothly played or as well recorded as this. It's true that the harpsichord continuo is pretty inaudible, but the string tone is rich and full, and quite lacking in that wiriness that seems to afflict so many recordings of baroque concertos. The only complaint that I have against the solo 'cellist, Enzo Altobelli, is that he could have made his part in the slow movement still more eloquent by ornamenting it in the way an eighteenth-century virtuoso certainly would have. This is a convenient format too. The 'cello concerto, which is a serious, even sombre, work, takes a side and a half, so that the miniature "concerto alla rustica" acts as both foil and fill-up. J.N.

WOLF-FERRARI. II Segreto di Susanna: Overture. I Rusteghi: Prelude; Intermezzo, Act 2. The Jewels of the Madonna: Festa Popolare, Act 3; Intermezzo, Act 2; Intermezzo, Act 3; Neapolitan Dance, Act 3. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Charles Mackerras. H.M.V. DLP1193 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.).

This is not a full-size disc; nevertheless it is the largest so far that has been devoted to Wolf-Ferrari's music in this country. The tiny overture to Susanna's Secret is particularly delightful, and, though you

might not guess it from this record, it is extremely hard to play well. The last performance I heard was tatty beyond words, this one sizzles. The next two pieces are from The School for Fathers under its original name of I Rusteghi. (It was Professor Dent's whim when translating this opera to transport the story to eighteenthcentury London and give it a well-known eighteenth-century title). The intermezzo has the tune, the one sung in the garden when, you may remember, there was that business with the cat on the wall. The end of side one and the whole of side two is given over to music from one of Wolf-Ferrari's serious operas, and as H.M.V. for some reason have switched to English, let us give it its Italian name: I gioielli della Madonna. You would never guess from this music that the opera is a tale of passion, sacrilege and suicide set in modern Naples. There are no undercurrents whatever in these little pieces. The Act 3 intermezzo can be enjoyed by the youngest child; indeed most of this disc would probably go down well in schools. The earlier intermezzo for some reason is played incomplete, without the very pleasant flute solo at the beginning and the end. And I don't think the end of the so-called Festa Popolare really stands up without the singing and crowd noises that should be an ingredient from the start. But the Neapolitan Dance is a real find, a sort of Italian "Sabre Dance" and it is played with invigorating gusto. This is just the sort of music Mackerras does very well indeed; all the playing is slick and vivid. R.F.

ANTHONY COLLINS. Finlandia, Op. 26 (Sibelius). Invitation to the Dance, Op. 65 (Weber, orch. Berlioz). A Night on the Bare Mountain (Moussorgsky, orch. Rimsky-Korsakov). A Midsummer Night's Dream—Incidental Music, Op. 61 (Mendelssohn): Scherzo and Nocturne. Danse Macabre, Op. 40 (Saint-Saëns). España (Chabrier). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. H.M.V. ALP1649 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8\fmathfrak{1}d. P.T.).

"Lollipops" with this particular orchestra invite comparison, of course, with those produced for our delectation by a certain other gentleman. It cannot be said that these performances have the sort of personality behind them which he produces nor, indeed, are they of particular distinction. They are, however, very capably done and as a selection of popular orchestral pieces, this fills the bill. I thought the Moussorgsky piece the least successful: it is just that fraction slow and certainly not very feroce. Compare Giulini's blood-curdling account of it and Collins' performance sounds tame indeed.

But it is good to find the *Danse Macabre* taken at an easy tempo: so many conductors strain after effect by going faster than a speed *modéré de valse*, as the composer puts it, whereas it makes its effect perfectly well when not hurried. Good, too, to find

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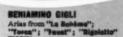








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"I Quattro Rusteghi"—
Prelude, and Internesso (Act 2);
lioielli della Madonna"—Festa Popo Intermesso (Act 2) and (Act 3);
Danza Napolitana (Act 3) DLPIISI



Charles Mackerras

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cont a vi Thir the middle part of the Midsumner Night's Dream Nocturne not pushed on, as it too often is, much to the detriment of the mood of the whole piece. The Scherzo, however, seems rather to play for safety in this performance—it could sparkle more—but the texture is quite remarkably clear and that is a considerable compensation. The rest is capably, though not brilliantly, done.

Good, sound performances—not more of music most of us are always ready to enjoy yet again. T.H.

★SIR JOHN BARBIROLLI. Overtures.

The Hebrides (Mendelssohn). La Forza del Destino (Verdi). Die Meistersinger;

del Destino (Verdi). Die Meistersinger; Tannhäuser (Wagner). Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. Pye Stereophonic CSCL70005 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

The Hallé gives luminous accounts of the two Wagner overtures, with sonorous breadth for the Masters and the Pilgrims alike, set against an entirely vivacious agility for the Apprentices and an entirely voluptuous orgy for the Venusberg. The Hebrides, too, goes exceedingly well, though Barbirolli is curiously ready to slow up substantially for the clarinet duet yet not for the end of the whole piece. The Verdi is not, perhaps, the equal of the other overtures as music; yet it, too, is well played.

All alike are particularly well recorded, with quite exceptional clarity. This allows many individual happy moments—when the timpani suddenly near-quote the opening of the Meistersinger overture, for example: this can seldom have told better on record. A general brilliance to the tone is also happy in effect. Only some marginal want of warmth, a very slight backwardness in balance of the first violin line, and something of a tendency to pre-echo and postecho separate the sound of this record from the best that there is.

M.M.

BRONISLAV GIMPEL. Liebesfreud;
Liebesleid; Schön Rosmarin;
Polichinelle; La Gitana; Caprice
Viennois; Tambourin Chinois
(Kreisler). Chanson Arabe (RimskyKorsakov). Fugue (Tartini). Marguerite (Rachmaninov). Danse
Espagnole (Falla). Praeludium and
Allegro (Kreisler). La Précieuse
(Kreisler). Bronislav Gimpel
(violin), Stuttgart Pro Musica
conducted by Curt Cremer. Vox
PL10950 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

"Gimpel plays Kreisler", says the title, and unfortunately he plays him throughout with orchestral accompaniment. This seems to me to spoil some of these pieces utterly. For one thing, Kreisler didn't write them with orchestral accompaniment, and, for another, good ensemble becomes impossible. All violinists who play pieces like La Précieuse follow their creator in pulling the time about to their heart's content, and orchestras just cannot follow a violinist doing this as a pianist can. Things come a fraction adrift over and over again. The "Pugnani" Praeludium is

a particular sufferer, though in many ways Gimpel gets more of the nobility of the piece than Campoli on Decca's "Homage to Kreisler" record. But how much more pleasant to listen to these "bogus" pieces on the latter with Gritton's authentic piano accompaniments. But I must not exaggerate. Gimpel is a beautiful player, and in such pieces as the Falla dance from his opera La Vida Breve and the Scheherazade theme the orchestral accompaniment is an improvement. (But then, surely they cease to be Kreisler arrangements; we are back, or should be, where we came in.) And in some of the pieces, such as Liebesfreud and Liebesleid, the ensemble is pretty good, and with Gimpel's enjoyably sentimental approach to these little trifles I was all but converted to the orchestrations. Perhaps Kreisler himself did these last two? recording is lush, with the soloist almost inside the microphone, which I suppose is where he ought to be for music like this.

★ESPANA! Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34 (Rimsky-Korsakov). Andaluza: Danza Española No. 5 in E minor, Op. 37 (Granados). España (Chabrier). Spanish Dances, Book 1, Op. 12 (Moszkowski). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ataulfo Argenta. Decca Stereophonic SXL2020 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2⅓d. P.T.). Monaural: (7/57) LXT5333.

These are warm and affectionate performances of the most inherently attractive music. The music is also well designed—particularly in the Capriccio—to show off the various advantages of stereo; and indeed excerpts from it have been used on some of the Decca demonstration discs. The most important factor, however, is, as always, the quality of the original recording. On this occasion it was first-class in every respect, and its excellence has been most successfully reproduced in the new medium.

The solitary drawback of the disc remains—a sadly anticlimactic listening order is still dictated to all but the most ruthlessly efficient listeners by on one side succeeding the Rimsky with the Granados, on the other the Chabrier with the Moszkowski.

M.M.

CHAMBER MUSIC

BEETHOVEN. Violin Sonatas: No. 6 in A major, Op. 30, No. 1; No. 9 in A major, Op. 47, "Kreutzer". Arthur Grumiaux (violin), Clara Haskil (piano). Philips ABL3226 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

With this record Arthur Grumiaux and Clara Haskil complete their cycle of the Beethoven violin and piano sonatas, and a very distinguished set it is, in many ways the best. For one thing the pianist is as much an artist as the violinist and is treated as such by the recording engineers. The two instruments are balanced as equals, which is what Beethoven would have wanted. For another, these players have

Beethoven's style in their bones. Kreutzer starts not too well in the sense that one is immediately conscious of rather a lot of surface noise, but as soon as the music gets going one forgets about such trifles. This performance is a real spell-binder, intense, beautifully phrased in detail and yet with a broad grasp of the whole. The theme of the slow movement is an object lesson in how to play Beethoven; the bars for piano solo at the very start are a miracle of comprehension, so that one feels for the moment that there is no other possible way of playing them. The movement seldom grips as it does here. These two movements occupy the whole of side one, with the finale and the whole of the other A major sonata on side two. Inevitably the little A major seems a bit of an anti-climax; that is Beethoven's fault. To give it a chance, one should hear it before the Kreutzer, not after. Its finale was, of course, the original finale of the Kreutzer, in which position it would surely have been far from satisfying. Here it does well enough. The two players bring the same grasp and subtlety to the playing of this work, and it is a joy listening to them.

I must add two qualifications so that prospective customers cannot complain when it is too late. First, this record is not for those who like the players to be as close to the microphone as possible; they are in fact farther away than is usual on gramophone records. Secondly, this is not the most exciting performance of the Kreutzer. Heifetz plays it with more verve and exhibitionism, and it is arguable that it is an exhibitionist work. On the Grumiaux-Haskil disc the emphasis is on the music; and this, in my opinion, is the performance that best conveys the spirit of the work.

R.F.

KREISLER. Liebesfreud. Liebesleid. Caprice Viennois, Op. 2.

SAINT-SAENS. Carnavaldes Animaux: Le Cygne. Wolfgang Schneiderhan (violin), Albert Hirsch (piano). D.G.G. EPL30335 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 84d. P.T.).

I'm not quite sure what that Swan is doing in this Viennese gallery, and why he should be played on the violin (he is definitely a 'cello); Schneiderhan isn't quite certain either, to judge by his deadpan performance. And then, what about the labels? You put on side A, so indented and so labelled, expecting to hear Liebesleid (or at any rate Liebesfreud, if you went by the cover), and out comes the Swan. Something wrong with the presentation of this disc.

Schneiderhan has the right sensuous feeling for Kreisler's pretty pieces; the opening tune of *Liebesfreud* is strangely accented, if I remember Kreisler aright, but otherwise the style and tone are winning.



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The studio sounds a bit cramped and wooden but otherwise all right. W.S.M.

SCHUBERT. Violin Sonata in A major, D.574. Violin Sonatina No. 2 in A minor, D.385. Wolfgang Schneiderhan (violin), Carl Seeman (piano). D.G.G. DGM18241 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

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Sonals in A and Sonalinas—comptes.

Martzy, Antonietti
(11/56) 33CX1399, 33CX1359
(5/57) CLP1112-3 Reviewing the ten-inch companion disc to this one (it contained the first and third sonatinas-DG16085) I wrote last January that it was "a performance which we can at last put beside that of Johanna Martzy" and concluded that its slightly more realistic recording made it even preferable to hers. Exactly the same applies to the new record. Schneiderhan's playing has a wonderful serenity about it, and yet he can give us fire or wit too where they are called for. I have sometimes felt that he was almost too civilised an artist, particularly in such things as Bartók's Second Violin Sonata, which was issued a few months back, but Schubert's violin works are absolutely up his street. In Carl Seeman he has an exceptionally sensitive partner, and the recording allows us to hear him as precisely that-an equal partner, not an accompanist. This is in fact chamber-music playing of the highest order, and as long as you are content not to seek here the profundity of Schubert's late quartets it is a record that can be wholeheartedly recommended. J.N.

SCHUBERT. Octet in F major, Op. 166. Vienna Octet.

Decca LXT5455 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 21d. P.T.).

★Decca Stereophonic SXL2028 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 21d. P.T.).

Monaural: Vienna Octet (2/55) LXT2983 (7/56) DGM18285 Berlin P.O. (Members)
D. Oistrakh
Berlin P.O. Ensemble

Competition in recordings of the Schubert Octet is extremely fierce, and strangely there are only three groups to the five available recordings. David Oistrakh leads a Russian ensemble, and the Berlin Octet and Vienna Octet contribute two performances each. The Berlin performances are for different companies, and the composition of the ensemble differs too, but the Vienna Octet remains the same in both recordings for Decca-I imagine that LXT2983 will shortly be seconded to the Ace of Clubs label.

The new version is slightly different. rather more lively in spirit as well as sound -and slightly higher in pitch. exquisitely polished in phrase and tone. On stereo I began by feeling unhappy; the instruments sounded cramped beneath a low ceiling. Eventually I moved the two speakers rather closer together, and put them on chairs instead of bookshelves, and then the sound was fine, and the ceiling raised to the height of my own drawingroom. This may be quite unscientific, but it works. The instruments separate wonderully well in the complicated passages, and

the various tone colours are vivid as well as beautiful.

J.N. has been maintaining that the D.G.G. Berlin Octet version is the best. Very fine it is too, for my taste a little sleepy and over-sentimentalised; the new Decca isn't so plushy in sonority, but more lively, and the Viennese phrase the music more vividly and with clearer articulation. The Andantes and Allegrettes don't decline into slow movements. The players seem to me slightly more accomplished, particularly the clarinet and horn, though the Berliners are fine too. Its' rivalry on the very highest level, almost a matter of personal caprice. J.N.'s is probably still D.G.G./Berlin; mine is now Decca/Vienna. But the scales are only just tilted. W.S.M.

INSTRUMENTAL

BACH. Organ Works. Passacaglia in C minor, BWV582. Fugue in G minor, BWV578. Pastorale in F major, Allabreve in D major, BWV590. BWV589. Canzona in D minor, BWV588. Helmut Walcha (organ). Recorded on the Schnitger organ at Cappel. D.G.G. Archive APM14511 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

The Passacaglia is the main attraction on this disc, and Walcha has seized the full measure of its greatness. His performance is meticulous yet powerful, and his grasp of the form is exemplary. There is, at the very beginning, during the statement of the theme, a blemish or two, though whether this is due to Walcha or to some trick of overblown pipes I am not certain. Once the Passacaglia gets under way, however, the listener is drawn into its rich texture, its logical intricacy of design, and its matchless exposition of Bach's musical thought. The Fugue, based on the same subject as the first section, is sensibly taken at a comparable pace, as recommended over a hundred years ago by Griepenkerl, much of whose advice is still sound. Schnitger's organ could hardly be bettered for balance of inner parts, and that larger (though often neglected) balance between manuals and pedals in organo pleno.

Most people find the Pastorale an odd but endearing work. It consists of several short sections, which originally existed in separate manuscript copies. They were united in only one source, which Forkel owned, the first section being entitled Pastorella. The key-scheme of the four sections possesses plausible logic (F-A minor; C; C minor -C major; F) and it is quite possible that Bach intended them to be played in sequence. Walcha's registration here is on the lighter side, stressing the clarity and charm of the music.

The G minor Fugue, sometimes called the "Little G minor" or "Folksong" Fugue, is one of the best known of Bach's shorter organ works. Less familiar are the Allabreve (conscientiously edited from an old and defective copy) and the Canzona, for which the autograph is lost, though numerous

copies testify to its popularity. Once again both performance and recording are excellent, and the disc as a whole may be warmly commended to Bach-lovers.

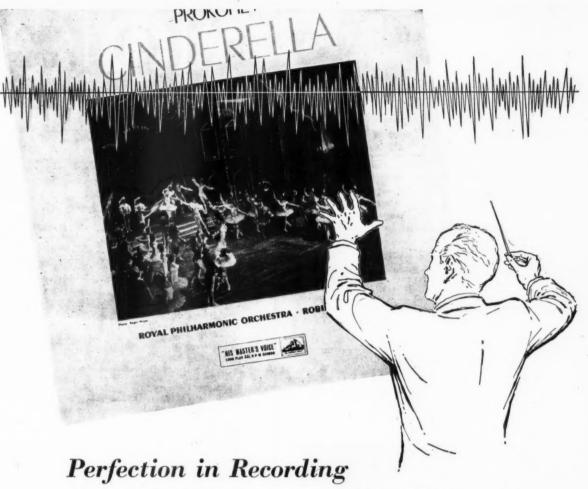
MOZART. Andante, K.616. Fugue in G minor, K.375. E. Power Biggs (organ). Philips ABE10021 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3ld. P.T.). Recorded at St. Bartholomew's Church, Mörlenbach.

This little disc is a postlude to the Power Biggs records of Mozart organ works already reviewed in these columns. Not that the fugue can really be counted as an organ work. Mozart seems to have written it as an exercise without any particular instrument or instruments in mind, and he never even bothered to finish it; the last few bars are by someone else. It is often published as a piano duet. I can never understand why it is that fugatos in the middle of Mozart's works are so wonderful, whereas his fullblown fugues are often so dull. This, frankly, is one of the worst. He is painstaking about turning his tune upside down, but never thinks to provide any episodes of interest or contrast between the entries. The little andante on the other side (without variations, contrary to the sleeve and label) was written for mechanical organ at the very end of Mozart's life, and this is a delightful piece, made the more delightful by the plopping sounds Power Biggs produces on the organ of St. Bartholomew (dated c. 1730, builder unknown). This is presumably played on the positive; the pipes sound much closer to the microphone than they do in the fugue, and there is less resonance.

*ANDOR FOLDES. Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D minor, BWV903 (Bach). Piano Sonata No. 6 in F major, Op. 10, No. 2 (Beethoven). Waltzes, Op. 39 (Brahms): No. 1 in B major; No. 2 in E major; No. 3 in G sharp minor; No. 15 in A flat major. El Amor Brujo (Falla): Ritual Fire Dance. Nocturne No. 4 in C minor (Poulenc). La Fille aux cheveux de lin (Debussy). Mazurka No. 26 in C sharp minor, Op. 41, No. 1 (Chopin). Nocturne No. 13 in C minor, Op. 48, No. 1 (Chopin). Mephisto Waltz (Liszt). Andor Foldes (piano). D.G.G. Stereophonic SLPEM136002 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

The pattern is familiar from all the less enterprising concert-hall recitals: some Bach, a Beethoven sonata, a few odd moments of Romance, and an apologetic glance at the earlier and safer by-products of our own century. Thus far D.G.G.'s Klavierabend Andor Foldes differs little from many an other klavierabend. But few pianists playing in fewer halls achieve this clarity of sound, perhaps to be heard at its most impressive in the Bach—an idiomatic reading of the Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue opens this particular piano evening memorably.

A similar forthright approach illuminates much of the other masic. The Chopin



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Asv church Tritt couple of Chri descril in rhy group, recom Der Fr voice a

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perhaps benefits least; but some considerable fire is allowed to propel the Falla, and the Liszt Mephisto Woltz is played brilliantly in the extreme. Everywhere alike there is entirely first-class sound. D.G.G.'s customary svelte piano tone responds well indeed to the embellishment of stereo, the obvious absence of directional effect serving only to emphasise the other qualities of the medium.

CHOPIN. Ballade in F major, Op. 38, No. 2. Barcarolle in F sharp major, Op. 60. Julian von Karolyi (piano). D.G.G. EPL30030 (7 in.. 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

Karolyi's pleasant but somewhat reserved performance of the Barcarolle has long been available as part of a Chopin LP Recital disc issued in 1955. The Ballade is new, and is perhaps a little more compelling, though it does not quite attain the highest standards. This pianist seems to me conscientious and capable, but the music seldom glows under his fingers. R.F.

CHORAL AND SONG

BACH. Cantatas. No. 152 "Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn". Hanni Mack (soprano), Walter Hauck (baritone), Kammermusikkreis Emil Seiler. No. 158 "Der Friede sei mit dir". Horst Günter (bar.), Ulrich Grehling (violin), Hermann Töttcher (oboc), Johannes Koch (viola da gamba), Horst Stöhr (double bass), Karl Egon Glückselig (positive organ), Hanover Music Academy Chamber Orchestra directed by Karl Egon Glückselig. No. 200 "Bekennen will ich Seinen Namen". No. 53 "Schlage doch, gewünschte stunde". Hildegarde Hennecke (contralto), Concert Group of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis directed by August Wenzinger. D.G.G. Archive APM14099 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Cantata No. 152: Mack-Cosack, Hauck, Seiler Musikkreis (3/57) APM14046

Cantata No. 158: Günter, Hanover Academy Chbr. Ens., Glückselig (9/57) EPA37020

Cantatas Nos. 53 and 200 (10/58) OL50169

As will be seen above, the first two of these church cantatas have been issued before.

Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn (No. 152) was coupled with an unsuccessful performance of Christ lag in Todesbanden (No. 4), which I

of Christ lag in Todssbanden (No. 4), which I described as "sluggish in tempo and jog-trot in rhythm": but No. 152, by a different group, was well done and altogether to be recommended. The previous recording of Der Friede sei mit dir (No. 158) for solo bass voice and chorus was also excellent, though I felt more variety of tone would have been acceptable from the soloist, Horst Günter.

Schlage dech (No. 53) is well sung by Hildegarde Hennecke, but not in such good style as Helen Watts on the Oiseau-Lyre disc, nor so well accompanied. On that disc the soloist followed the phrasing of the

orchestral introduction, but Miss Hennecke ignores it. The conductor should have seen to that and should also have used a harpsichord continuo. There is an extraneous noise in the fourth bar before the voice comes in that ought not to have escaped notice. August Wenzinger takes Bekennen will ich Seinen Namen at a slower speed than Thurston Dart, which is perhaps preferable. It is a pity these two items are duplicated in this way when so many church cantatas remain to be recorded.

The balance and recording on this disc are satisfactory.

A.R.

Clavierbüchlein vor Anna BACH. Magdalena Bach. March in D major: Minuet in G major: March in E flat major: Rondo in B flat major: Willst du dein Herz mir schenken: Prelude in C major: Polonaise in G minor: Minuet in D minor: Polonaise in F major: Gedenke Doch: O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort: Solo per il Cembalo: Bist du bei mir: Polonaise in G major: Musette in D major: Minuet in F major: Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten: lässt walten: Ich habe genug: Schlummert ein. Maja Weis-Osborn (soprano), Kurt Rapf (harpsichord). Vanguard PVL7048 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 21d. P.T.).

Young pianists invariably make first acquaintance with Bach by learning some pieces from the second Anna Magdalena Clavier Book, and many memories will be awakened by the delightful idea of assembling on this disc a number of these pieces, together with some of the vocal solos -Bach's wife is said to have had a charming soprano voice-from the same source. She herself wrote out many of the pieces. The C major Prelude is the first of the "48", and the recitative and aria Ich habe genug . . . Schlummert ein (the lovely slumber song of death), were used again in the Church Cantata, Ich habe genug (No. 82), for solo bass, which Bach composed in 1731. As the Anna Magdalena Book is dated 1725, one must suppose that Bach wrote it in later-Spitta implies this-as it does not seem likely that he composed it as a piece on its own. Gedenke doch ("Consider, oh my soul, remember the grave and ponder on the end") is followed in the Book, as on the disc, by the chorale O Ewigkeit du Donnerwort ("Eternity, O word of might").

Kurt Rapf plays the harpsichord pieces very acceptably and with well varied registration, and Maja Weis-Osborn has the kind of clear and fresh soprano voice one can imagine Anna Magdalena to have possessed. It is a great pleasure to hear the tender little song Bist du bei mir ("Be thou but near me and I, contented, will go to death which is my rest") sung in so unsophisticated a way and without a trace of sentimentality. All this artist does on the disc is admirable.

The recording, which should be played at a level to give the appropriate intimate atmosphere of Bach and his wife making music together, gives an excellent balance and is very pleasing in tone.

A.R.

BRAHMS. 15 Romances from Die Schöne Magelone, Op. 33. "Keinen hat es noch gereut"; "Traun! Bogen und Pfeil sind gut für den Feind"; "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden"; "Liebe kam aus fernen Landen"; "So willst du des Armen"; "Wie soll ich die Freude, die Wonne denn tragen?"; "War es dir, dem diese Lippen bebten"; "Wir müssen uns trennen"; "Ruhe, Süsliebchen"; "Verzweislung"; "Wie schnell verschwindet so Licht als Glanz"; "Muss es eine Trennung geben"; "Geliebter, wo zaudert"; "Wie froh und frisch mein Sinn sich hebt"; "Treve Liebe dauert lange". Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone), Jörg Demus (piano). D.G.C. DGM18480 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

There are some people who will say that Brahms was basically a song-writer, and that all his symphonic and chamber works are so much vain striving—the essential Brahms is vocal. They are inclined to say the same about Mahler; a perverse view, I think. The world would certainly be a lot poorer without Brahms's songs; what makes one doubt their superiority to his instrumental music is the test of listening to a large collection of them at a stretch.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau has a Hugo Wolfish predilection for concentrating on the works of one song composer at a time. He sang his way through Beethoven and Schumann and most of Schubert; just lately he has been concerned with Brahms. He gave a Brahms recital at the Festival Hall (and no doubt in all the capitals of Europe), and he made a Brahms record for H.M.V. Now here is another one. But this time it isn't just an anthology, but a sort of song-cycle. Ludwig Tieck, who is famous as one of the standard German translators of Shakespeare, wrote a novel called Die Schöne Mageloue when he was in his twenties, about a knight in shining armour and his beloved whose name was Magelone. have never read the book, and literary critics are in fact somewhat sniffy about Fieck as a novelist. But I gather that the knight Peter swears eternal love to the young lady, and then rides off to the wars, is made a prisoner of war in the east (the Crusades I infer), tempted by the sultan's alluring daughter, resists her offers, and escapes in a little boat. The last song finds him back home, reunited to Magelone. As in the novels of Goethe and Mörike the action is punctuated from time to time by poems-an operatic method of novelwriting, allowing the characters an aria every so often, so to speak. These poems, or romances, are what Brahms set as his Op. 33, dedicating them to his singer-friend Julius Stockhausen. The piano part is elaborate and important, so that one is glad of an accompanist who has solo experience and a strong interpretative feeling for Brahms.

Jörg Demus, who is one of Fischer-Dieskau's several accompanists, is a good choice for this record. So indeed is Fischer-Dieskau himself; the sympathetic, ardent baritone, with the ability to breathe life into every phrase he sings, and with a

natural intelligence for words that has matured and developed since we first heard him in 1951—this singing is very much what one imagines Stockhausen's to have been like, what Brahms had in mind when he was writing the music, H.M.V. record, superbly sung as it was, left an impression of monotony in mood the Magelone Romances are more varied in tempo: several of them are equestrian or knightly and so lively; many of course are gently amorous, and some sad: a very beautiful one is sung by Magelone when she is convinced that she will never see her lover again. The moods are effectively organised, and as often happens in songcycles the first song is quoted in the last

It is the actual musical invention of songs that does slightly disappoint; Brahms has used this mood, that pianistic figuration, the other melodic curve, more memorably elsewhere. Still, with Fischer-Dieskau and Demus in such persuasive form (well balanced for once, too), one is driven to play this and that song again and again-I have interrupted the writing of this review several times because I was impelled to return to "Sind es Schmerzen" with its heady opening section, and to "Wir müssen uns trennen" which is the knight's farewell to his lute, and to Magelone's "Wie schnell verschwindet", and the spacious opening of the last song "Treue Liebe dauert lange". The E minor symphony and the violin concerto are just as essential Brahms as any of these, but it's worth having a beautiful record of both. As you might infer, it's a record to dip into rather than play at a sitting. Brahms meant it for a cycle, I know, but after you've heard it once that way, you'll probably like it best piecemeal. Clean, probably like it best piecemeal. unruffled sound, and a beautiful piano tone.

W.S.M.

EULENBURG. Rosenlieder. Monatsrose; Wilde Rose; Rankende Rose; Seerose; Weisse und rote Rose. Walther Ludwig (tenor), Walter Bohle (piano). D.G.G. EPL30296 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8\d. P.T.).

Prince Philipp zu Eulenburg, 1847-1921, was at the turn of the century German Ambassador at the Viennese Court, an intimate friend of Kaiser Wilhelm II, and a poet and composer. His Rosenlieder are pretty drawing-room songs, half-way between ballads (in the later English sense) and Lieder. There are five in the cycle: Monatsrose (Monthly Rose), Wilde Rose, Rankende Rose (Climbing Rose—with a very sentimental last line, "und leise lächelt die rosige Braut"), Seerose and Weisse und rote Rose (White Rose and Red

Rose—a song of contrast, with a "daring" chromatic bass). Walther Ludwig meets their modest vocal demands with accomplishment. The record has a pretty sleevedesign, but no word about the composer, not even a date. Recording good. A.P.

"Zadok the Priest" (arr. Sargent).
Solomon: Chorus "From the censer curling rise" (arr. Costa and Sargent).
WALTON. Belshazzar's Feast. James
Milligan (bass-baritone), Huddersfield Choral Society (Chorus Master:
Herbert Bardgett, O.B.E.), Royal

Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. H.M.V. ALP1628 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.). Belshazzar's Feast: Walten Boult (1/54) ALP1089 (4/54) NLP904

Each of the previous recordings of Belshazzar's Feast has taken up a full disc: H.M.V. is clearly much to be commended for its good intentions in finding room also for two Handel pieces. Whether we shall all be as grateful as we ought to be will depend on our attitude to certain English traditions. If we admire the confused roar often produced in English cathedrals by a large organ, we probably also admire the sound of a big chorus of lusty voices having a "good sing". Zadok the Priest, being a coronation anthem, can legitimately use the impressive sound produced by big forces, even if the inflated orchestration here (exciting as it may be qua sound) belongs to the nineteenth-century Crystal Palace tradition; but when it is found that an almost complete lack of consonants makes the opening section quite unintelligible, and when moreover, in the chorus from Solomon, literally the only words it is possible to extricate are "happy" and "live for ever", many of us (the kind who don't call the organ "the king of instruments") will wriggle our toes uncomfortably, and while realising that an obviously good choir is enjoying itself hugely, would prefer greater clarity of texture and enunciation,

Fortunately, in the main work here, Walton's brilliantly barbaric Belshazzar's Feast, more of the chorus's words come through, though the incisive diction of the London Philharmonic Choir (in the Nixa recording) cannot be expected from a body of this size, and this must detract from a narrative work. Yet is it only the size which is responsible for some failings in this performance? The semi-chorus in this performance? section "While the kings of the earth" is completely obscure, and in other places-"Babylon is fallen" and the enumeration of the various pagan gods-no great effort seems to have been made to get the key words across. In fact, it is true to say that in several places the chorus is far too casual about detail in general: "How shall we sing the Lord's song?" is unsubtly done, and Walton's markings of fp on words like "wept" and "mirth" are ignored; small words are most often gobbled up (e.g., "Required of us a song"). No amount of energy or thrilling mass tone can compen-

less tone and more music.

sate for such shortcomings. James Milligan, who takes over Dennis Noble's traditional party-piece, does well with his virile and clear voice; he has however a bad "oo" vowel, and in his first recitative ("Babylon was a great city") does not always sing in the middle of his notes. The Liverpool Phil's contribution is almost the best part of this performance; it is noticeably more polished than in its previous recording made in the early '40s, and not only reveals the orchestra's own improvement but shows the guidance of a more experienced hand. It is a mild disappointment not to have in the orchestra the saxophone before "For they that wasted us required of us mirth", which is so effective in the Nixa recording, or the anvil for the god of iron (as in the earlier H.M.V.); and for the overwhelming effect of the antiphonal brass bands I suppose we shall have to wait for the stereo version. I hope there is one-it may clarify a lot of the details submerged

MOZART. Lieder. Die Zufriedenheit, K.349, "Was frag' ich"; "Komm, liebe Zither", K.351. Helmut Krebs (tenor), Adolf Hartmann (mandoline). Trio. Das Bandel, K.441. Quartet. Caro mio Druck und Schluck. Margot Guilleaume (soprano), Helmut Krebs, Fritz Wunderlich (tenors), H. Günter Nöcker (bass), Fritz Neumayer (harpsichord). D.G.G. Archive EPA37121 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

After the two songs, charmingly sung by Helmut Krebs on one side of this disc, came a trio and quartet rightly called on the leaflet "scherzhafte", that is "comical". The texts are given, in German only, and when A.P. reviewed the Bandel Trio on D.G.G. Archive APM14067 (March, 1957), here reissued, he confessed himself defeated by the German. Considering it is Viennese dialect, I do not wonder he found himself

I can do no more than tell the story given in Jahn's biography of the composer. "Mozart and his wife and one of his pupils, Gottfried von Jacquin, were out walking one day when Constanze happened to lose a ribbon which her husband had given her and exclaimed, 'Liebes Mandel, wo is's Bandel?'. Jacquin, a tall fellow, picked up the ribbon and refused to let her have it until she or her little husband should catch it". Mozart afterwards wrote and set to music the verses based on the incident. "Mandel" can mean "almond" (tree) or "a number of fifteen"—and so, I imagine, Constanze made a play on the word.

The text of the quartet, also by Mozart, mixes Italian and Viennese dialect in a ludicrous fashion, using a number of nonsense words in the process. The amusing result is a parody of eighteenth-century opera buffa style. The persons taking part are Constanze, Mozart and two friends designated only by the first letters of their names, F and H. A typical line is "quello ladria wir können nix dafüra, cara Cobochti!". An entertaining disc, and well recorded.

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MOZART. Mass No. 18 in C minor, K.427, "The Great". Wilma Lipp (sop.), Christa Ludwig (mezzo-sop.), Murray Dickie (tenor), Walter Berry (bass), Vienna Oratorio Choir and Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Grossman. Vox PL10270 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Moralt (2/56) ABR4043-4
The C minor Mass of Mozart, like Schubert's B minor Symphony, remained unfinished, and in neither case is the real reason known. A modern apologia might be simply phrased as "pressure of work" for both Schubert and Mozart worked hard and fast, enjoying equally the inevitable reward of a regrettably early death. Yet the reason why Mozart began the Mass is no secret, although there must have been as great an inner urge as there was an external stimulus-in this instance a promise to his wife which he intended to honour. He began work on the Mass in Vienna during the summer of 1782, and wrote shortly afterwards to Constanze that when he brought her to Salzburg the following year he would have a newly composed Mass performed. Rumour has it that Constanze sang one or two of the solos in the first performance, which took place on August 25th, 1783, in St. Peter's Church.

By the time this new Mass came to be rehearsed, only the Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus and Benedictus were finished; the Credo was sketched as far as Et incarnatus, which should have had an obbligato organ part as well as the three wind parts we are accustomed to hearing. Apparently Mozart made good these deficiencies by using sections from his earlier Masses, and this is roughly what happens in the accepted performing edition by Alois Schmitt which is recorded on the two Philips discs. Vox give us, on one LP, all that part of the C minor Mass we know to be genuine and of 1782/3 vintage.

A comparison between Philips and Vox is thus a matter of taste: some may prefer a complete work, skilfully enough restored yet obviously unlike what was really intended for the C minor Mass, while others may prefer a shorter, more concentrated composition that holds within itself a precious facet of Mozart's versatile and often unpredictable genius. There may be Mozart-lovers who will have to do with neither, on the grounds that his church music is an unrewarding subject for study, and an untypical aspect of his musicianship. Yet they would do well to reconsider things in the light of this new record, which evokes-at least for me-the entire transition from baroque to rococo church music, with its fabulous and inconsequential mélange of Italian chamber duets, operatic arias and cadenzas, Thuringian counterpoint and Saxon sonority. There will never be anything like it again, so you may as well hear this record and allow yourself to be convinced of its unique message.

Grossman, who conducts, is successful in putting over the message, and he has a good grasp of style as well as a genuine feeling for reasonable tempi. His opening of the Kyrie is dark-hued and powerful, relentlessly moving onwards like some

mighty procession. Moralt begins in a sleepy, non-committal manner which destroys all the drama of the movement and throws a wet blanket over its inevitability. Though Grossman, to my mind, is the better musician, he is unable to persuade his soloists to develop a long, pure and lyrical cantilena without bumps or accents. A shortage of rehearsals with the soloists may have been the cause; or else some deficiency in the voices themselves. The best of the four are Christa Ludwig and Walter Berry, and if you hear them in the Benedictus, where Mozart treats the voices as pairs, omitting what might have been an alto part, you will notice the difference between their kind of line and the less smoothly flowing phrases of Murray Dickie and Wilma Lipp. This is not by any manner of means easy music, and due credit should go to the soloists for bringing off the substance of the work in all its glory. But the most detailed preparation is needed to ensure perfect balance in, for example, the Quoniam. Wilma Lipp suffers from unsteady intonation, and an occasionally edgy tone, and there is no doubt that Christa Ludwig steals her thunder in that amazing duo, Domine Deus. It is wonderful to hear a mezzo, in this type of music, with real dramatic power and a subtle sense of phrasing. Murray Dickie comes into his own in the quartet of the Benedictus, and although he sings with spirit his range is not as even as it might be.

The test-piece, of course, is the Et Incarnotus, apparently a quite irreligious piece of music, though written in a style that survived until the early nineteenth century. Wilma Lipp has her fair share of vocal acrobatics, and very nearly brings off a brilliant show. But once again there is too much accentuation of shorter notes-a merciless pumping of quavers which should flow with grace and ease. My favourite section is *Laudamus te*, in which Christa Ludwig excels herself with breathtaking virtuosity, yet somehow keeps uppermost the sheer musical impact of this extra-ordinary piece of writing. The chorus is ordinary piece of writing. The chorus is vigorous and full-blooded, bringing great weight to the eight-part double chorus Qui tollis, full of stark symbolism and magnificent colours. In the Credo they echo perfectly the naïvely Mozartean conception of the church militant, which Madame de Staël later castigated in De L'Allemagne: "Violins and trumpets form part of the Dresden orchestra during divine service, and the music appears more martial than religious; the contrast it produces with the contemplativeness of a church is not agreeable-life should not be awakened among the tombs". That was not Mozart's idea, as his tonic-and-dominant Credo clearly shows, but this music is for your enjoyment.

MOZART. Requiem Mass, K.626.
Teresa Stich-Randall (soprano), Ira
Malaniuk (contralto), Waldemar
Kmentt (tenor), Kurt Böhme (bass),
Franz Schütz (organ), Vienna State
Opera Chorus, Vienna Symphony
Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm.
Philips ABL3213 (12 in., 30s. plus
11s. 9d. P.T.).

 Krips
 (1/51) LX3030-1

 Scherchen
 (0/56) DTL93079

 E. Jochum
 (1/57) DGM18294

 Horenstein
 (4/57) (R) DL270

 Beecham
 (2/58) CFL1000

When this review appears there will be only a few weeks' reprieve for the Krips and Scherchen discs, for they are due to be deleted on the last day of the year. With four versions remaining, it should not be difficult to choose the best. Both Jochum and Böhm, in this new Philips record, use the Vienna State Opera Chorus and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. The difference in their respective readings is startling; so, too, is the response of singers and orchestra. Böhm seizes the drama of the music, plays it up to its fullest extent, and welds his soloists into a balanced and cohesive group. In comparison with this vividness of treatment, Jochum's performance sounds workmanlike but dull. The trombone soloist in Tuba mirum (is it, could it be the same man?) plays so much better for Böhm. This very difficult obbligato (which Beecham assigns partially to a cello) is played in the Philips version with great dignity, yet with a fine feeling for the lyrical lines which Mozart permitted, almost incongruously, for such a subject.

The choral singing and balance is especially good under Böhm, and the intensity of the cataclysmic opening of Dies Irae is one of the first indications of his great superiority over the other conductors. He has the gift of driving his ensemble without making them sound frenetic, and he can make them sing and play their hearts out without producing bad tone. The violins scamper around under Jochum; Böhm rightly tells them to keep the bow firmly on the string, and thus not only doubles the sonority, but adds to the intensity and brilliance of the playing.

As I said before, the soloists blend well, although they have strongly pronounced individual features of timbre and voiceproduction. Not everybody cares for the "white" sound beloved of Teresa Stich-Randall, though they cannot deny that it is a change to hear a soprano soloist sing in tune as she does. The test comes in such passages as "in nomine Domini" from the Benedictus, where the ascending chromatic scale, normally a continuous chain of pseudo-trills, emerges in all its beauty and dignity, topping the harmony like some strange new instrument of the orchestra. Yet Miss Stich-Randall has good control over her voice, and she can make it quake with passion if she wishes. I liked the direct. forthright, and non-hooting quality of the contralto, Ira Malaniuk, whose singing of Judex ergo cum sedebit is far and away better than either Höngen (Vox) or Pitzinger (D.G.G.). The tenor, Waldemar Kmentt, is well-known for his Bach singing and for his operatic ability: this stands him in good

The Supreme Negro Singer...

D.S.

"Emperor of Song"

Ma curly-headed baby; Swing low sweet chariot; Old Kentucky Home; etc. H.M.V. DLP1165(L.P.) stead when the Mors stupebit begins. Kurt Böhme is perhaps the weakest of the team, for his voice, though full and round, is a shade unsteady in intonation when the higher dynamic levels are reached. He is almost swamped in the Tuba mirum—the only piece of poor balance I have found in this otherwise superb record.

I realise that many will remain faithful to the Beecham performance, although a few bars are missing and there is some tampering with the orchestration. If the genuine version is to be preferred, this new record by Böhm will take some beating. D.S.

MOZART. Vesperae solemnes de confessore, K.339: "Laudate Dominum". Great Mass in C minor, K.427: "Et incarnatus est". Vesperae de Dominica, K.321: "Laudate Dominum". Litaniae Lauretanae, K.195: "Agnus Dei". Maria Stader (soprano), Berlin R.I.A.S. Orchestra and Choir conducted by Gustav Koenig. D.G.G. DG17110 (10 in., 22s. 3d. plus 8s. 8d. P.T.).

Maria Stader's performance of "Laudate Dominum" from the Solemn Vespers of a Confessor does not provide any exception to the fact that there has been no recording of the piece to equal the singing of Ursula van Diemen on the old 78 disc (H.M.V. C2736). She is good, but has not the same perfect legato and sense of repose. In spite of Einstein's defence of the secular style of "Et incarnatus est" from the C minor Mass, with its cadenza on the first syllable of "factus", I find the music, in its context, utterly distasteful. As a show piece Miss Stader sings it as well as she does another coloratura display, "Laudate Dominum", from the Sunday Vespers. Far more worthy of the liturgy, and of Mozart, is the lovely "Agnus Dei" from his second setting of the Litary of Loreto, and this is also the best performance on this disc. The chorus is excellent. The orchestral accompaniments are well played—though the introductory bars of "Laudate Dominum" from K.339 are a bit sentimentalised-and the organ is satisfactorily balanced in the "Laudate Dominum" from K.195.

Miss Stader is in excellent voice throughout, but seems to be more concerned with vocal effect than with trying to express the sense of the words.

A.R.

SCHUBERT. Die Schöne Müllerin, D.795. Julius Patzak (tenor), Walter Klien (piano). Vox PL10830 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.). Fischer-Dieskan (4/53) ALP1036-7

I found it hard to believe, in listening to this disc, that the fine artist we know Julius Patzak to be in opera should so lamentably fail in Lieder. There is, from first to last, hardly any variety of tone in his singing, barely a hint of tenderness or sorrow, no real feeling for the words, only an unremitting forte or, at the least, mezzo-forte. Mr. Patzak makes no attempt at characterising the master miller and his daughter in Am Feierabend (After work) or the young miller and the brook in the penultimate song of the cycle. It would be tedious (and to me

painful) to criticise the singing in detail. I will only ask the reader to put on any of the songs as recorded by Fischer-Dieskau and Gerald Moore to hear what a gulf separates the two interpretations. The last page of *Pause* (Respite) would do as well as any, or the strophic song *Morgengruss* (Morning Greeting).

The pianist's violent onslaught on his instrument in Das Wandern (Journeying) filled me with forebodings only too well realised in the succeeding songs. I have rarely heard such insensitive, lumpy, unimaginative accompanying as this. But this is not all. The acoustic is that of a large bathroom with the singer now near and now far (compare Das Wandern and Halt!), and the piano tone in any loud passageand there are all too many-is of the clattering metallic kind. The two performers are not even in agreement about tempo in Thränenregen, the pianist being compelled to slow up when the singer comes in.

This unfortunate issue upset me considerably, a feeling that only disappeared when I played over the Fischer-Dieskau/Gerald Moore recording again. There are certain things that can be criticised here, of course, but we are given a really distinguished and intimate performance of the cycle by these two fine artists, and one that conveys the true feeling of the tragedy of hopeless love. Of that there is not a hint in the Vox issue. Its only merit lies in the fact that the cycle is contained on a single disc. And that, like patriotism, is not enough.

A.R.

CZECH CHRISTMAS PASTORELLAS.

Good Night my Little Jesus (Linck).
Vlasta Urbanova (soprano). My
Lovely Nightingale (Ryba). Milada
Subrtova (soprano). Pastorella in
C major, "Gloria" (Koutnik). Ivo
Zidek (tenor), Karel Kalas (bass),
Prague Radio Chorus. Pastorella
in G major (Skrivanek). M. Dvorakova (soprano), Milan Slechta (organ).
Pastorella Jucunda (Linek). Z.
Kroupa (bass) with Children's Chorus.
Pastorella a tres voces in A major
(Milcinsky). Cantus Pastoralis pro
Nativatate Domini (Suchanek). M.
Dvorakova and V. Krilova
(sopranos). All with Prague Symphony Orchestra conducted by
Ladislav Sip. Supraphon LPV346
(12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

The Czechs were called, in the eighteenth century, the most musical people in Europe (I believe it was Mozart who said so). This music helps to show what he meant; the first three composers represented were schoolmasters; of the others nothing is known (according to the Czech sleevenote), and the whole nature of these Pastorellas, designed to be performed by local musicians, was ingenuous and unpretentious. Yet the music is entirely disarming, and though some of it now sounds machine-made (the pieces by Skrivanek and Milcinsky left me quite cold), there is a good deal of character and individuality in the rest. The Linek piece, which is an extended aria, makes the sounds of gallant

music, with reminiscences of J. C. Bach and early Mozart, yet cannot be called imitative. Again, Koutnik's Gloria, a delightful cantata about the shepherds and the angels, is difficult to identify stylistically, not far from Handel, but not all that near either.

Not great music, then, but something attractive for listening at Christmas time, as a change from carols round the piano (or is it round the television set nowadays?). The seven pieces were recorded in a twelfthcentury church in Prague, with professional musicians. The strings seem a huge body for Milcinsky's dull little symphony-that is what it is, though its title suggests a vocal trio-and some of the female singers are unsteady in tone. But the men and the chorus in the Gloria, and the children in the Pastorella by Linek, are most enjoyable. A pity that the sleeve couldn't tell us the content of all the songs; and it isn't at all clear which pieces are being discussed at the end of the note. W.S.M.

★SACRED SONGS. Hear my prayer—
O for the wings of a dove (Mendelssohn). St. Paul (Mendelssohn):
Jerusalem. Silent night, holy night (Anon., arr. Woodgate)†. O divine Redeemer (Gounod). Jerusalem (Parry)†. Jubilate (Anon., arr. Woodgate)†. O come all ye faithful (trad., arr. Woodgate)†. Abide with me (Liddle). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) with Choir and London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Decca Stereophonic SXL2049 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2‡d. P.T.). Monaural: (12/57) LXT5392. †Available also on Decca Stereophonic SEC5002 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3‡d. P.T.).

J.N. reviewed the mono version of this just a year ago; now, in time for another Christmas, here is Mme Flagstad again with her plushy Victoriana, this time in stereo. Now we can hear that she's singing fairly far back on the conductor's left. The choir in Hear my Prayer has a fuzzy sound that I don't care for, and it is drowned by the orchestra at its soft entry in O for the wings of a dove. Much as I love Mme Flagstad I am shocked that she should be induced to record some of these selections. There is nothing of art in this deliberate exploitation of antiquated philistinism; Mme Flagstad gives even Liddle's Abide with me the benefit of beautiful tone and idiomatic enunciation. but she can't manage to sound convinced about her musical material, and I don't blame her. Still, if this disc or the selections available on stereo EP send somebody to her Wagner records, some good will have been done. W.S.M.

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RHOS MALE VOICE CHOIR. Hark

ed. Gwynn Williams). Emmanuel (Old Welsh

the Herald Angels Sing. Domine

non sum Dignus (Tomas de Victoria

Melody arr. Gwynn Williams). Hen don Llyfr y Ficer (Welsh Hymn).

While Shepherds watched their

Flocks by Night (French). Capel Iwan (Welsh Hymn). Ave Verum (Ludovico da Viadana). Holy Night (arr. Haydn Morris). Wele Gwawriodd (Welsh Carol). Adoramus te

(Palestrina ed. Gwynn Williams). Moab (Welsh Hymn). Goodwill

(Ieuan Gwyllt ed. Gwynn Williams). Yr Nhawel Wlad Judea Dlos (Welsh

Hymn). Mannheim (Hans Hassler).

O Heol I Heol (Welsh Hymn).

Stabat Mater (Pergolesi ed. Gwynn

Williams): Amen. Rhos Male Voice Choir conducted by Colin

Take a look at the contents list. If it

attracts you, go right ahead: the male

voice choir from Rhos in Wales is well

trained, and the organ accompaniments are

nicely judged. For a listener like me who

doesn't speak Welsh, most of the hymns and

carols are so much Greek, and their tunes

aren't as good as the ones like Ebenezer and

Ton-y-bottel which we know best. I liked

the solo baritone in Capel Iwan, and the way

he was placed not right at the front under a

28s. 6d. plus 11s. 11d. P.T.).

Delysé ECB3147 (12 in.,

Veni

OPERATIC

LEHAR. The Merry Widow.

Hanna Glawari
Danilo
Camille
Valencienne
Baron Zeta
Cascada

Hilde Gueden (sop.
Per Grunden (bar.
Waldemar Kmentt (ten.
Karl Donch (bar.
Cascada Peter Klein (ten.

With members of the Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Robert Stolz.

★Decca Stereophonic SXL2022-3 (two 12 in., 57s. 6d., plus 22s. 5d. P.T.). Decca LXT5448-9 (two 12 in., 57s. 6d., plus 22s. 5d. P.T.). Monaural:

Monaural:
Philharmonia, Ackermann (7/53) 33CX1051-2
Sadler's Wells Opera Company, Reid (excerpts)
(10/58) CLP1226

The new Decca recording of The Merry Widow has the same Valencienne, Emmy Loose, as the famous Columbia one: if only it could also have had the same Hanna, Danilo and Camille! For in the repertory of the record collector (who has all the most famous singers of the day at his call) this new contribution is definitely a second cast. Set Hilde Gueden against Schwarzkopf, Per Grundén against Erich Kunz, Waldemar Kmentt against Gedda, and in every case you find a lack of charm, character and finesse—the three qualities which lift the Columbia operetta series to a pinnacle where, so far, they stand alone. That general statement covers all the details which can be discovered by comparing any of the principals in their wellknown "numbers".

It is hard on the new Decca that it should be called on to stand comparison with such a set (but of course it must: the record business is competitive, and one of the reviewer's duties is to guide prospective buyers through the alternatives): for in its own right this is a distinguished and highly enjoyable issue. The names of the soloists speak for themselves (though Per Grunden may be unfamiliar to some; he has been a Volksoper leading tenor for five years). The conductor is the veteran Robert Stolz, composer of Wild Violets, who helped Lehár prepare The Merry Widow for its Theater an der Wien première in 1905 and conducted subsequent performances. Before the 1914-18 war he was a conductor at the Theater an der Wien. The Overture used in this set is his concoction, a potpourri scored with a musical-comedy hand that knows none of Lehár's delicacy. The text we must no doubt take as authoritative: and I should point out that the role of the hero is here a tenor one, as Lehár intended; in the Columbia set Danilo is a baritone, and there are several transpositions and adaptations. Not that I can feel they matter very much one way or the othernot nearly so much as Kunz's superior charm and characterization in the part.

The stereo recording is well made. When the Overture is done, there is a vivid sense of a big party in progress; and all the crowd scenes are highly effective. The male line-up for the "Weiber, weiber" ensemble is clearly suggested; and the entrance of the Grisetten is particularly striking (so it is in the monaural version). Naturally there is less difference so far as

the soloists are concerned. (It is interesting to compare a number like "Vilja", which has a choral refrain, in the Decca stereo and the Columbia monaural. Using twinspeakers for each, you get the soprano centre; when the chorus enters, you find a space and definition in the stereo disc that is lacking in the other). And since the solo singing is the most important part of operetta-more so than the chorus and the orchestra, which benefit more particularly from the new technique-I do not think the advantages of the new recording outweigh the superior virtues of the older performance. In other words, even though I have stereo equipment, I intend to stick to the Columbia monaural set. All that the recording engineers can do to provide "atmosphere" and "presence" they have done, most brilliantly; but "atmosphere" on the gramophone is also created by the way the singers utter words, phrase, and colour their tone: in a real sense, monaural Schwarzkopf has "presence" that stereo Gueden cannot achieve.

The same, only more so (if you see what I mean.) about the monaural Decca—even though it is, in fact, a slightly more brilliant recording than the Columbia. A sentence of praise for the neat presentation of the Decca set, with album and notes in one.

LEONCAVALLO. I Pagliacci.

Canio Nedda Bealamino Gigii (ten.)
Nedda Iva Pacetti (sop.)
Tonio Mario Basiola (sop.)
Silvio A Peasant Giuseppe Nessi (ten.)
Members of the Orchestra and Chorus
of La Scala, Milan (Chorus Master:
Vittore Veneziani), conducted by
Franco Ghione. Recorded July 1934.

MASCAGNI. Cavalleria Rusticana.

Santuzza
Turiddu
Lucia
Alfio
Lucia
Alfio
Lola
Members of the Orchestra and Chorus
of La Scala, Milan (Chorus Master:
Achille Consoli), conducted by Pietro
Mascagni. Recorded April 1940.
The two operas are automatically
coupled on three 12 in. LPs as follows.
ALP1610. Side 1, part 1, Cavalleria
Rusticana: Side 2, part 3, Pagliacci.
ALP1611. Side 1, part 2, Cavalleria
Rusticana: Side 2, part 3, Pagliacci.
ALP1612. Side 1, part 2, Cavalleria
Rusticana: Side 2, part 3, Pagliacci.
ALP1612. Side 1, part 3, Cavalleria
Rusticana: Side 2, part 1, Pagliacci.
ALP161-12 (three 12 in.,
90s. plus 35s. 1\frac{1}{3}d. P.T.). The records
cannot be purchased separately.

From a policy point of view these strike me as rather mysterious reissues. In advance I thought I should be grateful, for I heard all these singers in the flesh before the war and admired the discs when they were the latest thing (Caw '34; Pag, post war, but made in 1940).

Why reissue? Presumably for Gigli's memory. Certainly not for Mascagni's; his conducting is by no means the best feature of the coupled set. Gigli's "Un tal gioco", "Vesti la giubba" and finale are of course very fine in their way: he was at his

HUNGARIAN SONGS. Bardos. Kossuth Songs; Dana-dana, Bartók.

Kossuth Songs; Dana-dana. Bartók. Banat; Mihálynapi közzöntő; Ne hagyj itt!; Cipósütés; Ne nemj el!; Levél az otthoniakhoz. Farkas. Gypsy Song. Kodály. Három Gömöri Népdal; Ave Maria; Egyetem-begyetem; Tánenóta; Villö; Esti dal. Liszt. O Udvozito Aldozat. Szabó. Petöfi Songs. Kodály Girls' Choir of Debrecen conducted by George Gulyás. Delysé ECB3148 (12 in., 28s. 6d. plus 11s. 1½d. P.T.).

After spending a day listening to records of songs in Czech, Welsh and Hungarian, I am beginning to wonder if language is a means of communication after all. I have no clue at all what most of these Hungarian songs are about: Bartók's Banat is translated "Sorrow", and the music certainly sounds as if somebody was in low spirits (though I learned that Banat was a Hungarian term for a district governed by a Ban or war-lord—it comes in The Gypsy Baron), and Ave Maria is plainly the Angel's greeting to the Virgin; likewise I would guess that Bartók's Cipósūtés, which means "Loafbaking" is a work-song with actions to suit the descriptive verses.

The choir is excellent; if you've seen one of the Hungarian song and dance shows you'll recognise the characteristic firmness of the voices, which tightens to a thrilling hardness of timbre in vigorous songs. And there's an enthusiasm in their singing that isn't easily resistible. If only there were some more information about the music.

W.S.M.

peak then and sobs apart, the singing is so instinctively beautiful and so much believed in as a dramatic expression that one salutes a fine, even epoch-making assumption to the role. But I had forgotten how crudely Pacetti was then singing (she had sung Forza and Norma with distinction); her Ballatella is vulgar without being exciting. Basiola is average—he was a good Amonasro I always thought, but better Prologues abound. Gigli apart, there is nothing special to make one want to hear this setgood average Italian offering of its days but in a recording which, with the best will in the world, sounds dead beside today's standard average. The interest of the conductor-composer as I said in Cavolleria is merely historical; the veteran speaks a chalerous foreword. Gigli made the quarrel duet eight years earlier, and more finely, with Giannini as Santuzza. Bruna Rasa who was still singing after the war was a loud and passionate Santuzza, but the lack of refinements in her singing and her hiccup attack, and so on, make a poor showing up against the best of Callas, Nicolai, Milanov. Bechi was then a still impressive Alfredo and Simionato gets a ook in (which she was to enlarge into a considerable place soon).

For Gigli fans there are some very characteristic and sweet touches. Otherwise nothing much to recommend, certainly nothing to prefer to the Milanov-Björling, or Callas-Di Stefano outings. P.H.-W.

★MONIUSZKO. Halka—excerpts.

Halka — excerpts.

Alina Bolechowska (sop.)

Jontek Boddan Paprocki (ten.)

Andrzej Hiolski (bar.)

Kolnik Edmund Kossowski (bass)

Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Miedzyslaw Mierzejewski. D.G.G. Stereophonic SLPEM136003 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Overture. Januss's recit. and aria (How oft have I thought). Halka's Song (As a bush torn by winds), and Duet with Januss. Stoinik's Aria (Gentlemen, I'm happy). Mazurka. Halka's recit. and aria (I wish I were a lark). Jontek's recit. and Dumka (The wind whistles). Mountaineers' Dance.

It is always with a considerable sense of pleasure that one embarks on a perfectly new opera; and I was curious about Halka, which seems to be constantly in repertory east of the Curtain. First performed in 1848 in a two-act version in Wilno, where the composer was organist, it reached Warsaw in a three-act version ten years later, and was such a success that Moniuszko was appointed conductor of the Warsaw Opera. He produced many more operas, none of which achieved the lasting success of Halka.

The four-language sleeve in which this record reaches me contains not one word about the work. It has a plot similar to that of La Vida Breve. In Janusz's aria, he leaves his betrothal party to the wealthy Sophia, to give a sad and guilty thought to Halka, the country girl he has deserted. Halka arrives, singing her sad little song, and then (in duet) is joyously reunited to Janusz, who does not tell her about Sophia. He gets rid of her, and then Stolnik, Sophia's father, bids his guests welcome in a genial aria; and they dance a mazurka.

Halka's touching aria, "I wish I were a lark" (which Sembrich once recorded), opens the second act. She wanders back into Stolnik's garden, having waited in vain for Janusz. In the rest of this act (unrepresented on the record) her childhood friend Jontek (who is in love with her) disillusions her; she rushes into the wedding party, and Stolnik orders the servants to take her away. Act 3 opens with the mountaineers' dances, and later includes Jontek's sad aria in dumka rhythm, in which he pities Halka's fate (the dances and this aria appear in reverse order on the record).

reverse order on the record). The style of the music is a little hard to describe. Moniuszko evidently did not have a soaring imagination; and although he was well trained, there is something slightly "home-made" about the piece. I have now heard the record three times. My first reaction was: undistinguished and disappointing. My second: there is something here after all. It's not like anything else, and therefore is in that sense original. And finally, I began to find these melodies distinctly winning; they went on running through my mind, and I began to see why Halka had kept its hold on the repertory. It has freshness, and genuine emotion. The melodies are the life of the piece (unless in the unrecorded parts there are more striking examples of dramatic harmony and orchestration). I think it rather a pity that D.G.G. should have included three orchestral numbers, rather than giving us, say, the cavatina that Halka sings over her dying baby in the last act, or the dramatic scene where she thinks of firing the wooden church in which Janusz's wedding is being celebrated-but thinks better of it, and instead throws herself from the rocks into the river. All the same, one can be very grateful for a disc which brings us the most famous parts of an unfamiliar opera.

The Polish singers all have strong, useful voices. None is a strikingly imaginative or subtle artist, but all give pleasure. The recording is excellent: the usual D.G.G. characteristics of clarity, spaciousness and "comfort", enhanced by stereo. In particular, there is some strikingly real orchestral sound in the mazurka. A.P.

PONCHIELLI. La Gioconda.

NCHIELLI.
La Gioconda.
La Giecoa
La Ciecoa
Alvise Guido Neria Amadini (cont.)
Alvise Guido Neri (bass)
Enzo Grimaldo
Barnaba
Isepo Gunni Poggi (ten.)
La Gioconda.
Maria Amadini (cont.)
Giulio Neri (bass)
Gianni Poggi (ten.)
Paolo Silveri (bar.)
Armando Benzi (ten.)
Plero Poldi (bass)

Orchestra and Chorus of Radiotelevisione Italiana conducted by Antonio Votto. Cetra LPC1241-1/3 (three 12 in., 90s. plus 35s. 3d. P.T.). Gavazzeni (2/58) LXT8400-2

When this jolly old Grand Opera came to LP for the first time (except for an old Urania set) in Decca's excellent version, which I reviewed in February, I let my pen fly along under the memory of childish enjoyments and no doubt wrote at too great a length and with undue enthusiasm of the old war horse. (I was duly snubbed.) Nor did I imagine that so soon I should have to be hearing it all over and over again. May my friendly admiration for the fustian but

instinctively dramatic old work be taken for granted?

The Cetra cast is impressive and offers strong competition to the Cerquetti, Simionato, Del Monaco, Bastianini set-up on Decca. This Cetra recording is, I think, a shade brighter and often a little brittle. But both sets have plenty of perspective and atmosphere and the Cetra the rather better chorus (not that that really matters). Gavazzeni took certain things, for instance "Suicidio!", rather more briskly than Votto, who is a "last-ouncer". Under some of the more terrific solos and duets I could have done with more orchestral texture, but that is partly true also of Decca. One notices it in that terrific ladies' slanging match on shipboard ("He's mine!" "No, he's mine, I saw him first"), where it is rather fun incidentally to hear Barbieri, in terrific form, ten times beefier than Simionato, actually "take away" the duct from Maria Callas—who wouldn't often allow that to happen, I fancy. Simionato was a more delicate Laura than Barbieri, who hams it up a lot, though she sings "Stella marinar" affectingly. On the problem of Callas versus Cerquetti, I find I have to eat my words (honest, I hope). I said that I actually preferred Cerquetti's "Suicidio!" to Callas's, which at that time I knew only out of context on a 7-inch EP. In context, though plummy at the start and tremendously laboured, it is undeniably more exciting than Cerquetti's more rapid and firmer, less melodramatic version. In spite of some painful high notes and unevenness of effect, Callas's Gioconda is a marvellously vivid figure; everything is made memorable, convincing; everything is "dared" at its most exciting. I don't want to seem to be going back on Cerquetti, but an aria such as "Suicidio" as the climax to a growing interpretation can sound quite different and much more artistic than when cut from its context.

How the rest of the two casts match up is largely a matter of opinion. Poggi's attack, his accuti are unfailing. He sings very excitingly in the "Enzo Grimaldo" duet (Silveri, too, takes all his chances and is in good form, the equal of Bastianini). But Poggi cannot cope with "Cielo e mar", or at least the musing and delicate aspects of it. He hollers. But then so does Del Monaco. Siepi is slightly preferable to the late Giulio Neri. In the Dance of the Hours (side 5) you can easily compare the two conductors. Votto is the more lush, the more given to a "telling" rubato. Some of his ensembles on this side sound congested, and though this is a decent pressing, I had a little trouble with groove jumping and pre-echoes. But anyone contemplating a complete Gioconda should examine and perhaps select this P.H.-W. one.



SCHWARZKOPF - GEDDA EUNZ - STREICH - KARAJAN Johann Strauss

'Die Fledermaus'

Highlights

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PUCCINI. (a) Gianni Schicci: "O mio babbino caro". Hilde Gueden (soprano). (b) Madame Butterfly: "Un bel di vedremo". Renata Tebaldi (soprano). (c) La Bohème: "Che gelida manina". Flaviano Labo (tenor). (d) Tosca: "E lucevan le stelle". Carlo Bergonzi (tenor). Orchestra of the San Cecilia Academy, Rome conducted by Alberto Erede (a) and (b), Fernando Previtali (c), and Gianandrea Gavazzeni (d). Decca CEP562 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.).

This posey of Puccini's show-stoppers is handed out in time for the centenary. It gives mostly unalloyed popular pleasure and occasions no surprise at all. The composer was said to have had a contempt for those who "fell" for O mio babbino caro.
"Now for the juice", he is reported as saying when the artfully prepared tune first came up (I think it was "juice"). But it is also clearly an inspiration and Decca do well to offer the previous bars to "set" it. Gueden sings it appealingly. That too is the adverb for Mme Tebaldi's Un bel di, though in that case I could also have done with a few bars of introduction (the page beginning in English "weeping and wailing" à la Joan Hammond). Fine, affecting performance. The two young tenors do well too. Labo has the sturdier voice, Bergonzi the more refined sense of style, But both know how to sing Puccini. Both give sterling accounts of the well loved

This would make a charming present for a young person starting a Puccini thrill-box.
P.H.-W.

PUCCINI. La Fanciulla del West.

Minnie Renata Tebaldi (sop.)
Jack Rance Cornell MacNell (bar.)
Jack W.dlace Glorgio Tossi (bas)
and Piero di Palma, Giorgio Tossi (bas)
and Piero di Palma, Giorgio Gorgetti, Enzo
Guagni, Virgilio Carbonari, Edio Perussi,
Mario Carlin, Angelo Mercuri-til, Michele
Cazzato, Giuseppi Morressi, Silvio Maionica,
Athos Cesarini, Darino Caselli, Bianca Maria
Casoni.
Chorus and Orchestra of the San

Chorus and Orchestra of the San Cecilia Academy, Rome conducted by Franco Capuana. Decca LXT5463-5 (three 12 in.,

86s. 3d. plus 33s. 7\frac{1}{2}d. P.T.).

Decca Stereophonic SXL2039-41

(three 12 in., 86s. 3d. plus 33s. 7\frac{1}{2}d.

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Since 1912, for forty-six years, The Girl of the Golden West has been neglected in this country (except by television). Now this first LP recording arrives opportunely with the centenary of Puccini's birth (December 23rd). Columbia too have recorded the opera, at La Scala, with Birgit Nilsson in the title role. And it is possible that the gramophone may afford a more powerful introduction to La Fanciulla than any stage performance could do. On the stage our concentration and absorption in the drama (that disbelief which when listening to the records is so completely suspended) might be shaken by the sight of a real-life Renata Tebaldi squeezing her feet into the tiny little slippers from Monterey, or later, in a long white nightdress, snuggling up for the night in front of the fire on her bear-skin

rug. And if we had someone who really looked like Minnie, then would she be able to sing the part as eloquently as Tebaldi does? In general terms, I found that this performance "caught" me completely. I suppose it was the compound of unusually detailed and specific scene-descriptions in the score, plus a brilliantly managed stereo recording, plus, of course—and this is the most important—music of extraordinary imaginative power and eloquence. The listener feels that he is really in the Polka Bar, or in Minnie's bed-sitter, or on the edge of the great Californian forest. I don't mean aurally-as if one sat on the stage during a performance; rather, the sense of a stage and listeners in the stalls disappears altogether, and one projects oneself directly into the situations: weeps with the miners as they think about their homes and their mothers and their faithful dogs far away: like them, falls in love with Minnie: shares in their excitement and heightened bloodlust during the chase which opens the last act. This self-identification is not to be recommended as an approach to all operas. but it is the response Puccini aimed to secure; and it is perfectly evoked in this



Renata Tebaldi [Decca photo]

The première of Fanciulla was at the Metropolitan in December, 1910, with Destinn, Caruso and Amato, conductor Toscanini. The first London performance was during the 1911 Coronation season, with Destinn, Bassi and Dinh Gilly. A.R., who was present, has told me of the amazement of the musicians at the opening chords, showing that Puccini knew his Debussy; of Destinn's triumph; and of the deeply moving effect of Jack Wallace's "homesick" song, the Bible-reading, and the final scene. Yet, after a 1912 revival (with Martinelli) the opera was dropped. And

A CHRISTMAS GIFT ? SEE PAGE 297 at the Metropolitan it lasted only two seasons longer, and then disappeared until the revival for Jeritza in 1929.

Why was this? What is wrong with the Girl, as Puccini always called it? The composer in 1907 told Ricordi that "the Girl promises to be a second Bohème, but more vigorous, more daring, and on an altogether larger scale". I think that the weakness of the opera lies just in the parts where it aspires to be a second Bohème-when, for example, Minnie protests that "io non son che una povera fanciulla, oscura e buona per nulla". The love music is simply not . The love music is simply not on the Bohème or Buttersty level. What is wonderful is all the part concerned with Minnie's relationship to the miners. Puccini's imagination had been seized by the idea of these men drawn by gold-fever from their homes, from Cornwall, from Australia, from all over the earth, compelled to fashion out their own community. His preface to the score makes this clear; so does the music. Minnie is the only girl in the camp. With her "thirty dollars' worth of education" she teaches the men: she is their schoolmistress, their mother-figure, their sister-figure, scolding them like naughty boys when they squabble and shoot at one another. She has never danced (though she runs a dance-hall in which they dance with one another), and never been kissed. And she loves reading cheap romances, and dreams of herself as the heroine of one. This is terribly romantic and touching. The actual details of the romance that does come Minnie's way are less gripping, though its events are dramatic enough. Dick Johnson is the least amply realised of Puccini's heroes; and the swaying waltz theme (actually 6/4) which marks their love is perhaps the least memorable of all Puccini's love themes.

The great things in the opera are all the scenes with the miners, specially the "homesick" song, "Che faranno i vecchi miei", which is a knock-out; the hunt and the capture; and the finale where Minnie pleads with them all, with Happy and Handsome and Sonora and Joe, not to string up her Dick. Minnie's arias, "Laggiú nel Solidad" (she remembers her childhood life back in Solidad) and "Oh, se sapeste" (Oh, you've no notion how exciting my life really is; I have a little cob, etc.), are touching. What the opera really lacks is what Mr. Edward Greenfield, in his acute monograph on Puccini, calls the Grand Tune. "Ch'ella mi creda", grand tune though it be, does not fill the bill, since it is something apart from the main action of the opera (it would not spoil the whole if it were omitted); and the love-theme proper is not significant or distinctive enough.

In 1906 Puccini saw Debussy's Pelléas, and wrote to Ricordi that it "has extraordinary harmonic qualities and the most delicate instrumental effects". A reflection of these harmonic qualities leaps from the opening bars of the Girl, where the orchestra piles up a chord based on the whole-tone scale. Augmented triads are used freely; there are some striking passages in parallel fourths, and also a curious passage, Rance's

"Cos'è la morte?", built entirely on the whole-tone scale.

The performance is admirably cast and splendidly realised. Without coyness, Tebaldi perfectly characterises the gentle, romantic side of Minnie's nature, and she is equally good as she cries out, "Hip!" and clinks glasses with a customer. Her appeal to the miners in the finale would move a commissar to tears. Cornell Macneil, a New York City Center baritone (and a pupil of Schorr), makes a fine début as lack Rance. Puccini has not quite brought off the character, or resolved the unpleasant and the sympathetic in his nature, but Mr. Macneil makes him plausible in each particular passage. Del Monaco sings Dick Johnson's music in full, virile voice. Tozzi's performance of "Che faranno i vecchi miei" is magnificent, and the miners, one and all, make a first-rate team. The ensemble writing is very important. There are twelve solo roles of varying size, and choruses divided in various ways. All this is brought off excellently. Special praise to Giorgio Giorgetti (Sonora) and Piero di Palma (Nick, the barman); and to the Rome chorus, flicking out their "Dooda, dooda day" with precision.

I have played this set in the stereo version, which is a brilliant achievement, vividly recreating in each act the atmosphere of the bar, with the dance-hall leading out of it; Minnie's room, and the wide open Of the monaural version I have sampled enough to suggest that this too is

a first-rate recording. With the records there is a folder of notes containing an excellent introduction and synopsis by Robert Boas. For five shillings we can buy the libretto, which includes another, also admirable, introduction and synopsis by Quita Chavez, as well as one of Peggie Cochrane's splendid literal translations.

Two little passages have been cut in the performance, but probably they are cuts intended by the composer, for they do not appear in the latest Ricordi reprint of the vocal score. One of them is the passage where Billy Jackrabbit is caught licking the dregs out of the glasses, and then scolded by Minnie for not yet having married Wowkle (Act 1, cue-numbers 53-57). The other, a more important passage, is Minnie telling Dick how hard the miners must struggle to win their gold (cue-numbers 109-112; but the new edition is renumbered, so the cut in this case doesn't show). If you follow with an early score you will notice all sorts of little changes-extra bars, missing bars, sometimes different notes. Puccini must be responsible for some: e.g. the spoken dialogue in the second round of the poker game, which is most effective, and the off-stage humming along with the orchestra in the final pages of the first act.

The closing pages of the whole opera are also more striking in this new version, but in view of Mr. Dennis Vaughan's researches into the progressive deterioration of Puccini texts, we cannot always accept unquestioningly the authority of the latest edition.

SMETANA. The Two Widows.

Maria Tauberova (sop.) Drahomira Tikaiova (sop.) Eduard Haken (bass) Karolina Anezka Mumlal Ladislav Podhajsky Ivo Zidek (ten. Antonin Zlesak (ten. Miloslava Fidierova (sop. Tonik Lidka Chorus and Orchestra of the Prague National Theatre conducted Jaroslav Krombholc. Supraphon LPV312-4 (three 12 in., 90s. plus 35s. 3d. P.T.).

Smetana composed this most delightful comic opera in 1873, after completing his great festival opera, Libuse, and for a libretto he went outside his country for the first and last time. His choice fell on a French vaudeville which he had seen in Prague, but by the time he and his librettist had finished their work the result was indubitably a Czech opera. The fun lies in the contrasted characters of the two widows, who are cousins. Neither of them had cared at all for their late husbands, but while Caroline dresses in a fetching white dress and openly rejoices in her freedom, Agnes feels it her duty to wear heavy mourning and refuse to take any part in the harvesthome festivities that are about to take place on her cousin's estate, culminating in a ball. Mumlal, the surly gamekeeper, finds a poacher lurking in the grounds, who turns out to be a former lover of Agnes. He has no difficulty in getting himself arrested and brought into the house, where Caroline, a magistrate, sentences him to half-a-day's solitary confinement. The complications that ensue make up the rest of the story, together with the usual sub-plot.

The score abounds in melodious arias and concerted pieces for the solo voices; the chorus have little to do and there are only some brief snatches of dance music. The two widows are excellently characterised. Caroline has a sparkling aria in the first act which shows her to be a very merry widow indeed, but the most beautiful music in the opera falls to Agnes, a long scena in the second act when she is feeling utterly miserable and deserted. The slow section in this aria, begun by a clarinet over horn accompaniment, is exquisite. Then there is the celebrated duet for the two widows, in this act, in which they argue over which of them is to have Ladislav; Agnes, of course, refusing to commit herself-until near the end of the opera. This duet is a smash hit! Ladislav, amongst other things, has a charming strophic aria at the start of Act 2, a song of Maytime, and an excellent duet with Mumlal. The four chief characters are given a particularly lovely quartet in Act 1. Maria Tauberova is an enchanting Caroline and Drahomira Tikalova an effectively contrasted Agnes. Both are good singers. Ivo Zidek is adequate, if rather dry-voiced, as Ladislav, but Eduard Haken, as Mumlal, is vocally unsteady. The small parts are well taken and the opera, under Jaroslav Krombholc's direction, goes with a

swing; but the orchestra, which plays well, is, as before in these recordings of Czech operas, too distantly recorded. There is a strong case here for a disc of "highlights".

VERDI. Aida. King of Egypt Amneris Antonio Zerbini (bass) Miriam Pirazzini (mezzo-sop., Maria Curtis Verna (sop., Franco Corelli (ten.) Gian Giacono Guelfi (bar.) Amneris Aida Radames Giulio Neri Ramphis Athos Cesarini (ten.) Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of Radiotelevisione Italiana, Turin (Chorus Master, Ruggero Maghini), conducted by Angelo Questa. Cetra LPC1262-1/3 (three 12 in., 90s., plus 35s. 3d. P.T.). Erede Serafin Toscanini (12/52) LXT2785-7 (1/56) 33CX1318-20 (6/57) RB16021-3

The Aida position is very different from that of Otello. There has been a glut of recordings of this sumptuous opera since the old days when an Aida album weighed as much as a week-end suitcase. There were until recently four complete LP versions, of which-wouldn't you know it ?- the best, under Perlea with Milanov and Björling, is now deleted (H.M.V.). We are left with a Toscanini version (R.C.A.) in which, with all respect to the great man, I find his choice of singers unsuitable, and the very exciting, if rather wild Aida of Callas, with De Stefano in good form and Gobbi acting marvellously (Columbia). Decca's has lovely Tebaldi but is getting old, so the Columbia is, I suppose, still the one to recommend. Much as I would love to say that this Cetra newcomer outclasses all else, honesty bids me place it only midway in my collection of Aidas. In the flesh, of course, it would be thrilling enough, with Corelli and Guelfi toeing the footlights and vying with each other in sheer size and length of notes. I am far from denying that it has many stirring moments; Questa's conducting is satisfactory and seldom less than that. But so much depends on the style of the principals, and this is found wanting for such music. There is nowhere, for instance, singing as good as Tebaldi gives us in the Nile Scene on the Decca set (the difficulty there was to stomach Del Monaco's "Celeste Aida"). Considering how vilely the part of Radames is usually sung, one takes a low standard instinctively. On this, I think it is fair to say that Franco Corelli, with his vibrant and distinctive timbre, does not emerge with discredit. His "Celeste Aida", for instance, raises our hopes because it is not merely bawled or strangled, but sung con amore, with pleasing tone and feeling. That he is apt to take all his high notes well underneath and then screw them into tune is a fault which will displease some more than others, the last high note being launched rocket-wise, almost like a yodeller throwing the voice up an octave. But I don't think it is a "Celeste Aida" likely to raise the hackles-and that is something rare enough.

In the now increasingly unlikely event of my ever singing Aida myself (which would hardly precipitate a rush to the box office). I should, however, wish to be spared singing opposite a Radames who just refuses to



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ORCHESTRA conducted by
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come off the top notes we were holding together when my strength, Verdi and the conductor's patience all require that that particular note should cease. In the tomb duet, indeed, such reckless using up of the air supply seems suicidal. Maria Curtis Verna, who is also heard as Amelia in the Cetra Ballo, is a much more reliable Aida than some initial anxiety seems to predict. But, though not insecure in the way that Callas is, she often gives you the feeling that it is all going to be too much for her (which may be due to singing with so selfish a tenor, I do not know). Thus her performance in the first solo, though in the event quite passable, frequently sounds haunted by fear of inadequacy; the key aria needs fuller dramatisation and a greater variety of dramatic declamation. In the scene between the rival women she appears as a better stylist than the young sounding and energetic, if rather unweighty, Amneris. All the same, this scene (Act 2, Scene 1) comes off very well. You should sample it as among the best in the set.

In the Nile Scene, Miss Curtis Verna does pretty well in spite of one rather flat passage and a decided anxious high C (not the shining radiance we need so much) in "O patria mia". After that she improves greatly, holding her own in the duet with Guelfi (who sounds gigantic, if rather unsteady), and in the subsequent duet with Corelli, where in the lyrical andante section both sing very pleasingly. The final trio ("Tu, Amonasro? Tu, il re?") is vocally so very well contrasted, with the three principals all in such good form that one only wishes the orchestral support were properly in focus and a sufficient basis—the effort to get Guelfi into focus seems to have involved losing the strings at a crucial underpinning figure. Allowing that there are a good many small blemishes in missed note values and such, this account of the Nile Scene is quite able to hold up its head in the best company. The Amneris in her big moments of the last Act shirks nothing and passes the test pretty well, though there is too little firmness below and some of the high notes are decidedly dangerous. But after much Barbieri and Stignani it makes, as they say, a change to hear a princess less beefy. The freshness of the cast is indeed a selling point. For the tomb duet, Corelli again reverts to his strange "throw up" attack, Miss Curtis Verna, though good and artistic, still does not quite bring off the effect of ease and radiant ethereal hovering like "un angelo" which the music calls for. Tebaldi is the best there, with her steady legato, but Miss Curtis Verna has made strides and "deserves" the role.

The recording is not without blemish, and though the singing is always clear, not every strand in the score is perfectly audible. P.H.-W.

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VERDI. Simon Boccanegra.

Simon Boccanegra
Jacopo Fiesco
Paolo Albiani
Pietro
Maria Boccanegra
Gabriele Adorno
Araldo
Un' Ancella di Amela
Silvia Bertona (sop. Orchestra and Chorus of the Opera House, Rome (Chorus Master: Giuseppe Conca) conducted by Gabriele Santini. H.M.V.ALPS1634, ALP1635-6 (one single-sided, two double-sided 12 in., 79s. 6d. plus 31s. 04d. P.T.). (12/57) LPC1281 Molinari-Pradelli

A.P. wondered, in his review of the Cetra set, if he had been swayed by the splendour of the opera into overestimating the quality of the performance. After comparing the Cetra with the new H.M.V. set, I support him entirely. It is an enjoyable performance. But the new one is cheaper (five sides instead of six), more spacious and opulent in sound (the Cetra sounds like a live performance in a theatre), and with one exception contains a greater percentage of fine singing.

[E.M.I. photo] Tito Gobbi

A quick reminder about the opera. Simon Boccanegra is based on a play by Gutierrez, author of Il Trovatore as well. Verdi set it between Les Vépres Siciliennes and Un Ballo in Maschera; but the version we always hear nowadays, with the magnificent Council Chamber scene, is a revised one, made in collaboration with Boito between Aida and Otello. Verdi changed or refashioned large chunks of the musicyou can hear them, because the idiom suddenly suggests his last two operas-so that the finished product is as near late Verdi as makes little difference. The drama is involved, with disguises and secrets to complicate matters at every turn, but it is perfectly logical and convincing so long as one takes the trouble to do the necessary homework. The first time I saw it was at Sadler's Wells in 1948 where it was a huge success (why don't they revive it again?), and everyone who went seemed perfectly in the picture about who was who and who knew what. The opera centres round the monumental, uneasy, benevolent, father-figure of the Doge Simon Boccanegra, his daughter Amelia, her maternal grandfather Fiesco, and a villainous



[B.M.I. photo] Victoria de los Angeles

plebeian Paolo who is made to curse himself. For once in Verdi the tenor, Gabriele, is a comparatively colourless character, but the others are drawn in bold colours and strong chiaroscuro. The music often recalls Otello (Paolo is something of a study for Iago), but equally strongly Don Carlos, and even more in the new recording with Gobbi and Christoff in the cast. You can hear much other Verdi in Boccanegra; Trovatore in the first love duet, Ballo in the second one, Traviata, I think, in the much-maligned march at the end of the Prologue. The opera is full of wonderful ensembles; curiously, all the main characters are allotted an aria except Boccanegra himself, the most prominent of them all.

Silveri, in the Cetra set, was an authoritative Simon; but Gobbi is an even more masterly singing-actor and here he has one of his greatest roles, one that deploys his full range as a singing tragedian, and in almost every great moment, from the outburst of youthful happiness in the Prologue to the last, touching benedictions he contrives to make some point that Silveri ignored. Again, good as Mario Petri is, Christoff adds a dimension to every view of Fiesco; when Gobbi and Christoff are in duet, as Don Carlos-ites will know, the result is electrifying-it happens twice, at high voltage, in Boccanegra. As the dull but passionate hero, Bergonzi in Cetra has the edge on H.M.V.'s tasteful Campora. Monachesi is the Paolo in both sets, slightly more dependable in Cetra. But it is Victoria de los Angeles who turns the scales. Her Cetra colleague, Antonietta Stella, is passable; los Angeles is an inspired choice for the girlish, ardent heroine who weaves all the threads of the intrigue together, and has so much gloriousmusic to sing. It is a jewelled part, and she throws pearl after flawless pearl into the microphone; my notes on the records are full of delighted comments on her spinning top notes or delicate arpeggios-the only stricture is her occasional failure to draw that characteristic legato of hers when the music urgently implies it (but, by the way, she pulls out some lovely trills in the Council Chamber-Miss Stella misses them). Almost as important as the singers in this opera is the conductor, and Gabriele Santini gives a momentous, carefully paced and constantly illuminating reading of the score, again surpassing Molinari-Pradelli's very gratifying performance at many

points. The Roman Chorus sounds woolly in the punctuating comments during "Il lacerato spirito", but for the most part sings well, particularly so in the off-stage shouts near the start of the Council Chamber scene. The most impressive feature of the recording is its skill in recessing the big ensembles so that the individual voices blend yet can be distinguished; but the balance in general, a studio balance, is clear and non-partisan, if you understand me—the voices are forward, but the orchestra never sounds muffled.

Neither set is quite complete; the various small cuts are often supplementary, so that a tape-worm could probably muster a complete account of the opera. Two cuts bothered me: H.M.V.'s omission of the end of the exquisite trio for Simon, Amelia and Gabriele, and Cetra's omission of the short scene in which Paolo is told not to marry Amelia and then makes arrangements to abduct her. Whichever set you

get will be incomplete.

But for Hi-Fi and a feast of marvellous singing the H.M.V. set must take the laurels. One thing of which both sets remind us is that Verdi's greatness as an opera composer lies, not so much in La Traviata and Otello and Falstaff, as in the transitional works: Luisa Miller, La Forza del Destino, Don Carlos, Macbeth, and very firmly Simon Boccanegra. W.S.M.

WAGNER. Götterdämmerung: "Hier sitz' ich zur Wacht". Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg: "Das schöne Fest Johannistag". Joseph Greindl (bass), Berlin R.I.A.S. Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig. D.G.G. EPL30271 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 84d. P.T.).

Hagen's Watch was on DGM19063 which I reviewed in June last year. Quite impressive—though such a snippet seems and sounds finally "odd" in these days of continuity. But Greindl is heard to better advantage in this Ring excerpt than as Pognor, whose address in Meistersinger, Act I, is here given a surprisingly muffled recording. I could not get the voice to sound full and free and my impression is that the singer is wrongly placed in relation to the microphone. He does it intelligently of course, being a most practised and admired actor and singer, but supposing that you want just this bit of a mighty act, I don't think this is quite the best offer. P.H-W.

WAGNER. Götterdämmerung. Siegfried's Rhine Journey; Funeral March; "Seit er von dir geschieden". Elisabeth Höngen (contralto), Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. "Hoi-ho! Gibichsmannen". Josef Greindl (bass), Bavarian State Opera Chorus, Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Rieger. D.G.G. DGM19042 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

The performances of the two purely orchestral excerots on this disc, if not so distinguished in interpretation or playing as those by Furtwängler and the Philharmonia

Orchestra on H.M.V. ALP1016 (which also has the Closing Scene of Götterdämmerung with Flagstad as Brünnhilde), are nevertheless very good, but to sound fully effective they need plenty of top and a high level of volume.

Elisabeth Höngen's voice has perhaps lost some of its power, but her singing of Waltraute's Narrative has all the authority of a fine and experienced artist, and I found it most moving. There is no smell of the studio about it—a good acoustic helps here—it sounds like a stage performance and she makes one see Brünnhilde listening intently to the tragic story of Wotan wandering lonely about the world, and then returning to a silent Valhalla with his spear shattered by Siegfried.

There are few moments more affecting in opera than the exquisite passage for the orchestra, when Waltraute sings "Then he remembered thee, Brünnhilde", which quotes phrases from Wotan's farewell to his beloved daughter at the end of *Die Walküre*. Ferdinand Leitner achieves a well calculated crescendo on the orchestra as Waltraute describes the gods being summoned to council.

Hagen's call to arms (Act 2), with the powerful voiced Josef Greindl as that villainous character and the splendid Bavarian State Opera Chorus and the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Fritz Rieger, is tremendously vital and exciting: and once again it has the feel of the stage about it. The disc is worth getting for these two vocal excerpts

My only criticism of this disc concerns the close of Siegfried's Journey to the Rhine, which needs fourteen more bars to bring it to a proper conclusion, the chord that immediately proceeds the start of Act 1. Surely this could have been managed, as there appears to be ample space on the record. All else, however, is very good.

A.R.

LOVE DUETS. Otello (Verdi): "Gia nella notte densa". Iris (Mascagni): "Oh, come al tuo sottile". Carmen (Bizet): "Ah! mi parla di lei?". Les pêcheurs de Perle (Bizet): "Leila mia! Leila mia!". Faust (Gounod): "Tarda si fa. Addio!". Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor), Rosanna Carteri (soprano), Milan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antonio Tonini. Columbia 33CX1598 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

This series of love duets by two brighteyed Italians is like a series of picture postcards in bright colour posed by two lustrous models. However much the turn out, pose and clothing may vary, it is always the same two! One is Venetian, one Japanese, three French; the simpers are identical. I would like to like this disc, having often treasured a bag of love duets. But I recommend some caution to buyers. The most interesting piece is the long scene between Kyoto (a chap, not a place) and Iris in Act 2. Mascagni hoped it would repeat the success of the "cherry duet" in L'Amico Fritz. But it does not. It is sung rather loudly, badly and unimaginatively.

The soprano lacks any suggestion of frail oriental charm. The tenor, always the boy to get there eventually, sings the music in a loud, approximate way, though usually getting into the middle of the notes finally.

You cannot sing Verdi's love duet like this of course. Tebaldi and Del Monaco are preferred (I don't mean to be unkind). This effort is warm and vibrant and very like the average Otello duet that you can hear in the better Italian opera houses. But con-noisseurs had better go warily! The three French duets on the obverse are all out of style, with The Pearl Fishers the least unacceptable. It is the whole scene leading up to and including "Ton coeur n'a pas compris". (Carosio and Zampighi preferred-I do not mean to be unkind again.) The Micaela-José encounter is brash and vibrant—these two should pay heed to what old style singers of the McCormack era made of it in politeness, appeal and elegance. Similarly, in the lovely garden scene duet from Gounod's Faust the qualities wanted are definition of tone and a light, sensuous bloom on that tone, not the strident, voluptuous approach of Nedda and Silvio taking time off together. Loud, vivid recording. P.H.-W.

★WAGNER. Die Walküre—Act 2 (Annunciation of Death) and Act 3

(complete).
Brunnhilde
Siegmund
Wotan
Sieglinde
Gerhilde
Ortlinde
Waltraute
Schwertleite
Helmwige
Siegrune
Gringerde
Rossweisse

Kirsten Flagstad (sop., Set Svanholm (tea.). Otto Edelmann (bass) Marianne Schech (sop.). Oda Balsborg (sop.) Ilona Steingruter (sop., Grace Hoffman (sop.) Margaret Bence (cont., Clare Watson (sop., Anny Delorie (cont., Frieda Roesler (sop., Hetty Plurracher (cont.)

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. Decca Stereophonic SXL2031-2 (two 12 in., 57s. 6d. plus 22s. 5d. P.T.). Monaural: (1/58) LXT5389-90.

This is magnificent. A.R. has already reviewed the performance; but I cannot pass simply to the sound of the stereo version without first commenting, too, on the splendour of this performance. It was recorded last year, in Vienna-well after Flagstad's retirement from the stage. But the voice seems to have lost nothing at all. I can detect no trace of wear, or tiredness, or uncertainty, or ageing. This is Flagstad's Brünnhilde just as it used to thrill us in Covent Garden: glorious, resplendent, goddess-like. She is in even finer form than in the Götterdämmerung complete recording. Thanks to Decca, the most vital parts of this great impersonation have been preserved for posterity. At one time it looked as if E.M.I. having missed their chance, it would be too late. Now we have the records above, all Götterdämmerung (albeit in a setting unworthy of the heroine), andfrom earlier H.M.V. sets-a good deal of the Siegfried Brünnhilde. I understand that Decca have also recorded Flagstad as Fricka in a complete Rheingold, and as Sieglinde in Act 1 of Die Walküre.

Stereo does greater justice to her voice than any of the earlier records could do. This sou par Sch beli not mot abo qua O voic imag ther stead with

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Georg Solti Conducts

[Decca Photos]

is a brilliantly engineered recording. As with the best stereo discs, one can move quite freely about the room without upsetting the balance any more than if one moved seats in the theatre. Solti's very exciting reading of the score, superbly played by the Vienna Philharmonic, sounds tremendous. There are no stereo stunts to disturb one: a certain amount of "placing" of the Val-kyries, and an exciting moment when (after the Todesverkündigung) Hunding's horn booms from the distance and with terrible menace, make one start for a moment: but the whole thing has been achieved with supreme naturalness. One sits with eyes on the score, or on the admirable libretto and translation which Decca supply with the records, and simply enjoys the glorious sound, without bothering to trace which particular piece of furniture Grimgerde or Schwertleite is hiding behind. For-I believe I have made the point before-it is not any "visual" illusion or sense of motion which makes me so enthusiastic about stereo: but simply the superior quality of the sound which reaches my ears.

Otto Edelmann's Wotan is splendidly voiced. He is not an outstandingly subtle or imaginative interpreter of the role, but there is a great deal to be said for firm, steady, excellent tone; and he does sing with understanding. The Valkyries are a good team (though I don't know why Solti should have wished them to double-up on some of the solo phrases). In the Todesverkündigung (Annunciation of Death), Svanholm sings with vigour and artistry; he is most impressive and in his best voice. This Act 2 excerpt, by the way, continues well beyond Brünnhilde's exit, through the passage in which Siegmund contemplates his sleeping sister, as far as "Nothung zahl' ihm den Zoll" and Siegmund's exit to meet

Hunding.

I would make only two small criticisms of the discs. Edelmann is recorded in such a way that he seems still to be using his speaking trumpet after he has entered. There is, somehow, a suggestion of "public address system" about his earlier utterances. That is to say it comes from a proper distance, as it should, but at the same time with a faint metallic tinge and an exaggeration of the sibilants. This effect soon wears off;

but in general his voice has not been "placed" in relation to the orchestra as successfully as Flagstad's has. And second, at the great climax of the Todesverklindigung, "Sieglinde lebe, und Siemund lebe mit ihr!", it seems as if, either in the recording-booth or in the cutting process, the engineers feared too high a "peak", and slightly cut back on the dynamic level.

These things detract little from the glory of the set, which is a great recording of the century.

A.P.

LOIS MARSHALL. The Fairy Queen
(Purcell): "Hark! The ecch'ing air".
Acis and Galatea (Handel): "O
didst thou know . . . As when the
Dove". La Clemenza di Tito
(Mozart): "Parto, parto". Don
Giovanni (Mozart): "Crudele? . . .
Non mi dir". Der Freischütz
(Weber): "Wie nahte mir der
Schlummer . . . Leise, leise, fromme
Weise". Il Trovatore (Verdi):
"Tacea la notte placida". Norma
(Bellini): "Casta Diva". Turandot
(Puccini): "In questa Reggia". Lois
Marshall (soprano), London Symphony Orchestra conducted by
Eduardo Pedrazzoli. H.M.V.
ALP1642 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d.
P.T.).

One can imagine Beatrice Lillie, also a Canadian, laughingly listing this concert; "Just a few little things I sang . . ." If in fact Miss Marshall really could do justice to what must be the most testing LP recital ever put together, she would be what Maria Callas claims to be, i.e., the top diva.

The recording is clear; the accompaniment often plodding (the aria "Non mi dir" and the Turandot for instance). Miss Marshall sounds best in the Purcell and the Handel in which she floats along pleasingly. But Prince Sixtus's great set piece is hardly suited to this kind of voice, let alone style. "Non mi dir" is often applauded in the theatre when much less stylishly sung; but this version is a shade tentative to be a definitive gramophone performance, and the ends of the recitative sound skimpy, as if the singer were already tired or only just over a cold.

This suggestion of a cold is so strongly marked in the slow section of Agatha's "Leise, leise" that I don't think it can be my imagination-the voice seems not to be "speaking" on the expected part of the palate. When the singer warms to the climax she sounds better and of course I have no hesitation in saying that I think it a beautiful voice. In "Tacea la notte" (no cabaletta) the moulding of the phrases is weak, the definition which we want in this aria is also missed; and the singer sings dully, as though uninterested in the words 'un nome . . . il nome mio" which ought to surprise Inez at least, let alone us listeners. "Casta diva" (without chorus) all things considered comes off rather well, though there is some wretched quavering at the start of the second verse. But Miss Marshall has the right idea of the climax each time. Turandot's big aria is not, I would respectfully suggest, this singer's proper field (why not sing Liù?). It all sounds quite a strain and also quite dull compared to the best. Incision, attack, strong held notes are not forthcoming. By and large this is a generous concert, but it doesn't show the singer at her best, P.H.-W.

FOLK MUSIC

SPANISH SARDANAS. Placidesa;
Canigonenca. Novembre; Clemencia; Per Anna Maria; Flors al
Vent. Els Degotalls. Dolces Caricies.
El Petit Albert; Els Gegants
de Vilanova. Bonica; T'Estimo.
The Cobla Girona. Columbia
33SX1105 (12 in., 25s. 9d. plu
10s. 1d. P.T.).

Since, even with the present popularity of the Costa Brava as a holiday area, many people will know little about sardanas or the cobla bands which play them, and since the sleeve of the present disc is strikingly uninformative about the whole thing (not to say inept—fancy calling a cobla "an orchestra of odd instrumentation featuring woodwinds and a beat"!). I hope readers will forgive me if I quote parts of what I wrote exactly four years ago on another disc of sardanas. This group dance is more than just the national dance of Catalonia: it is the symbolic expression of Catalan patriotism, a manifestation of the democratic spirit, an allegory of day conquering night, and the living tradition of the medieval ball rodó (which you can see in fifteenthcentury sculptured capitals in Montserrat), all in one. The dancers, who gather in public squares on Sundays after Mass, do notspeak; they preserve a grave demeanour, rarely smiling; linking hands in a circle (which anyone who wishes may join), they point their toes and move a few steps to the right and the left, with the preoccupied air of people performing some hieratic rite (though in fact they are counting bars for all they are worth).

The cobla, as the band which plays for sardanas is called, owes its unique incisive quality (unbelievably penetrating in the open air) to the fact that, alone in the world,

it employs shawms. These instruments, the precursors of the oboes (which appeared on the scene only at the end of the seventeenth century) are to be found in their folk state in Yugoslavia, in the Breton bombarde and the Spanish dulzaina, but in the cobla have been developed mechanically, like other woodwind instruments. They possess a dynamic range from p to fff, and are quite the loudest woodwinds in existence, easily matching trumpets in tone. The cobla consists of a fluviol (pipe and tabor), which confines its activities here to an unvarying four-bar introduction and an occasional trill; two tiples or treble shawms; two tenoras or tenor shawms, the first of which is the leader of the band; two trumpets; a valve trombone; two fiscornos (bass flugel horns in C); and a string bass. All the wind instruments, incidentally, are held horizontally so as to point the sound straight out at the dancers.

Two basic moods may be heard in most sardanas, of which the dozen here (shortened for listening purposes) are characteristic. There is usually a melancholy section (often in the minor), in which the tenora takes the solo, playing with a wide, expressive vibrato: and a gay bouncing section led by the tiples in their traditional staccato style: the dancers' steps change strikingly according to the music. The hemiola cadence (another medieval survival) is also very common. Of the tunes here, El Petit Albert and Novembre are perhaps the best, though Canigonenca (which quotes that lovely folksong Montanyes de Canigo) is also appealing; and there is a greater degree of sophistication in the arrangements (use of canons, etc.) than is often the case with sardanas. These authentic, well recorded examples of the dance are bound to induce nostalgic reminiscence in anyone who has ever watched it, and to offer for those who have not yet had that opportunity the strident quality, the warm passionate tunes, the hypnotic repetitions, which make up an aural experience both unique and captivating.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

BEETHOVEN. Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. Overture "Egmont", Op. 84. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitsky. Camden CDN1001 (12 in., 19s. 9½d. plus 7s. 8½d. P.T.). "This is a High Fidelity Recording"

states the sleeve: but since it was made in 1949 one can only comment-"well, not very". I wonder that R.C.A. have not put it out plainly as a record of special historical interest, for that it certainly is, being the only example in our catalogues of the work of this remarkable conductor.

Opinions varied about Koussevitsky as an interpreter, but I don't think that anyone who heard him ever denied his tremendous gifts as a conductor, in the actual work of controlling and driving an orchestra. You can spot that from this record before you have got very far into Beethoven's first movement, in the remarkable control of

every phrase. Every note that is played is under the spell of that compelling personality, while even should you not particularly like the interpretation itself (but I do), you can scarcely fail to be roused by the terrific drive of the Scherzo's Trio and by the excitement of the Finale. Here is a great conductor to study-and, my goodness, he could make an orchestra play.

The sound is variable. At its worst it sometimes has that feeling of a slightly sagging flatness that old records seem to acquire: at its best it is really quite good. Something odd happens momentarily to the violins just after the start of the Overture's coda but, for the rest, the transfer is well

This is a record of great interest. And I should like to commend, too, the very reasonable price at which it is offered. T.H.

MOZART. Symphonies. No. 38 in D major, K.504, "Prague". Recorded December, 1936; No. 41 in C major, K.551, "Jupiter". Recorded January, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. H.M.V. COLH37 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

I can't help thinking that this reissue of Jupiter is certainly unnecessary and possibly even something of a mistake. Unnecessary, because Walter's reading of the symphony can be studied in a 1956 recording (issued here in April, 1958, on Philips ABL3206), whereas this pre-war sound is quite unusually bad. We have to listen to poor sound if we want to hear Weingartner, say, for we have nothing better: there is no earthly reason for enduring it in this instance.

I think it a mistake in that this is not Walter at his best. His reading of the first movement of this particular symphony has always seemed to me a dangerous one, with its rather slack speed and its rhythm perilously near sagging already in the 3rd and 4th bars. He brought it off, you may think, on his best days-but not, in my

opinion, here.

And perhaps that is not to be wondered at, for the recording was made just before he had to flee from Austria (Hitler invaded in March of that year) and if any man felt, not merely his own sorrow but the sorrow of all Europe at that time, it was Bruno Walter. I particularly remember one meeting with him in Vienna in the previous autumn. I had gone to his office in the Opera to collect some tickets for a performance (it was characteristic of him not merely to send them down to the stage door to be called for). It was immediately before lunch and Frau Walter, I had noticed, was waiting down below. So I said my thanks and made to leave at once. But I was asked to sit down and for some long time Walter talked. I think I have never seen a man who seemed to be carrying the unhappiness of all mankind so deeply. I mention this, for however much an artist may be able to immerse himself temporarily in his work and forget the outside world, there must have been days in January 1938 of overwhelming depression.

What justification there is for this record consists of the performance of the Prague, for it does not appear as if Walter has remade this. The 1936 sound is much better than that of the 1938 Tubiter and there is a great deal that is extremely beautiful in the playing, notably in the long and magnificent introduction. The allegro of the first movement is extraordinarily fast for a Mozartian allegro-it means semiquavers that tend to scurry and "fanfare" passages which lose their importance: but the presto of the finale is excellent and full of deft playing.

The slow movement, by the way, contains the only technical slip in the transfer, a short quaver in bar 71. In general the sound is reasonably good, though inevitably woodwind detail often goes for nothing. Still, one doesn't buy such a disc to learn about Mozart's orchestration, but to discover what one can of a great artist's interpretation. The record is accompanied, as usually with these E.M.I. reissues, by an excellent booklet. T.H.

ELISABETH SCHUMANN. Fledermaus (Johann Strauss II): "Spiel' ich die Unschuld vom Lande"; "Mein Herr Marquis". Der Vogel-händler (Zeller): "Wie mein Ahnl zwanzig Jahr" (Gesang der Nachtigall). Der Obersteiger (Zeller): "Sei nicht bös". Elisabeth Schumann (soprano), Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Karl Alwin. H.M.V. 7ER5108 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 31d. P.T.).

An unreserved welcome to two muchloved records. "Sei nicht bös" ("Don't be cross") has long been a favourite of mine. Elisabeth Schumann was very proud of her fluent and flexible whistling, and most accomplished it is, in the Nightingale Song from the other Zeller operetta. For she does whistle herself, unlike Alma Gluck, who between the verses of her "Listen to the Mocking-Bird" (and perhaps, too, in the Zeller song? I do not have her record of this) yields to Mr. Charles Kellogg, specialist at bird noises. I should point out that this is the German version of the Nightingale Song, recorded in 1929, not the English one which Mme Schumann also made, and which on H.M.V. E552 was coupled with "Sei nicht bös" (recorded in 1930).

Adele's two arias from Die Fledermaus (put in the wrong order, not that it matters much) are delightful and irresistible. "Mein Herr Marquis" (Adele's Laughing Song) dates from 1927, "Spiel' ich die Unschuld" from 1929: both came before the 1930 Fledermaus at Covent Garden, when Walter conducted a cast led by Lehmann, Schumann and Olczewska. It is particularly valuable to have the second aria so well transferred to microgroove, since 78 copies tend to be somewhat shrill and distorted at the end, while this version plays perfectly. Mme Schumann's negotiation of the coloratura is not flawless; but her singing and her utterance of the words have a directness, spontaneity and naturalness such as we too seldom hear nowadays. There is no "contrivance" in it, only a genuine and infectious sense of fun and character. A.P.

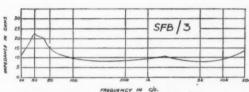
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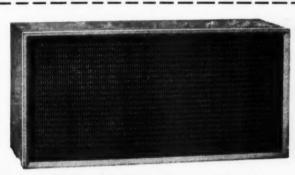
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POETRY AND DICTION, ETC.

EDGAR ALLAN POE. Poetry Readings. The Raven. Annabel Lee. Eldorado. To —. The Masque of the Red Death. Alone. The City in the Sea. The Black Cat. Read by Beall Rathbome. Philips Caedmon TC1028 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Over thirty years ago in these pages the Editor was full of righteous anger concerning the use by popular song writers of "beloved poems for excrudations of greasy sentiment over cuties and sweeties. example I have in mind", he wrote, "is a song which some pretentious jackanapes has had the insolence to call Annabel Lee". Now, 30 years on, our revered Editor can listen to this beloved poem recited on a record by Basil Rathbone, who, I am sure the Editor will agree, is given a difficult task by the poet in using the same consonant for the end of the Christian name and the beginning of the surname. Here, too, is The Raven, which Mr. Rathbone does brilliantly, and here, instead of pop songs, our thoughts just now turn to the ill-fated music of Josef Holbrooke, who died this year and whose Symphonic Poem based on Poe's work is still occasionally played. Poe exercised a strange fascination over composers, and yet none of the resultant works, save Rachmaninov's The Bells, is in the catalogue, and many were not even completed. Of Debussy's five opera projects following Pelléas, two were based on Poe, and indeed part of The Fall of the House of Usher was actually composed. Holbrooke also did a Bells, and also a Masque of the Red Death, which Basil Rathbone reads here brilliantly, with a voice like the velvet in the black chamber. If this is a silly story, the speaker's voice is absolutely compelling, whereas The Black Cat on the reverse really tells itself. Poe was a kind of American Hoffmann, whom, incidentally, he greatly admired. Maybe he has attracted the wrong composers and waits his Offenbach. Meanwhile every young actor should listen R.W.

POETRY READINGS. W. H. Auden. If I could tell you (c): Musée des Beaux Arts (h). George Barker. Galway Bay (h). John Betjerman. The Church's Restoration (f): The Olympic Girl (f). Edmund Blunden. The Midnight Skaters (a). Richard Church. Hays Wharf (g). Lawrence Durrell. Neune (b). T. S. Ellot. Journey of the Magi (c): A song for Simeon (d). Roy Fuller. The Family Cat (m): Translation (m). Robert Graves. 1805 (c): The Chink (c): The Survivor (c). Sidney Keys. William Wordsworth (c). Laurie Lee. The abandoned shade (c): Day of these Days (c). C. Day Lewis. Maple and Sumueh (b): A hard frost (h): Birthday poem for Thomas Hardy (h). Louis MacNeice. Conversation (h). Wilfred Owen. Arms and the Boy (f). Henry Reed. Naming of Parts (s). W. R. Rodgers. Carol (f): Beagles (f). Stephen Spender. Ultima Ratio Regum (f): In Attica (b). Dylan Thomas. The hand that signed the paper (f): Do not go gentle into that good night (c). W. J. Turner. Talking with Soldiers (c). Vernon Watkins. The Heron (h). Read by (a) Jill Balcon, (b) Pauline Letts, (c) V. G. Clinton-Baddeley, (d) John Glean, (s) Christopher Hassall, (f) Carleton Hobbs, (g) Richard Church, (a) C. Day Lewis, (f) John Betjerman, (h) Vernon Watkins, (f) W. R. Rodgers, (m) Roy Fuller, (e) Henry Reed and (o) Laurie Lee. Jupiter JUR00A2 (12 in., 28s. 1d. plus 10s. 11d. P.T.).

This is the second 12-inch record of the Jupiter Anthology of twentieth-century verse, the first of which was welcomed recently. The plan goes as before—some poems are read by professionals, some by the poets themselves: should more of the latter have been used? This is open to question-and perhaps answered by the

poets in person, I've certainly no quarrel with results here. What actually gave me some of the greatest pleasure was in fact these highly personal interpretations. Henry Reed's Naming of Parts for instance, a petulant recruit deeply bored by the sergeant instructor, letting his eye roam over springtime gardens-the "tone" of the poet's own voice-perhaps because it is so like my own I am told with its dyingduck overtones—is the making of the amusing piece. As for John Betjeman's The Church's restoration (the one about the stained glass of crimson lake and the horrible encaustic tiles in the nave!) it is worth the money alone; he caps it with the one about the Amazonian girl adored

I can't go into detail about every poem here. Results in the case of Richard Church (an attractive poem) and Roy Fuller (who chants and phrases the rhythms) are more open to discussion. The collection is put together with much art; and the good things I had to say of the first book can be repeated. If you want a preference between this and the ten-inch Yates and poems for several voices, I would back the latter as a first P.H.-W.

POETRY READINGS. Robert Graves. A frosty night (f and c). Thomas Hardy. Volces from things growing in a Churchyard (d, e, a, c, b, f and g): At Lulworth Cove a century ago (h and a): Inscriptions for a peal of Bells (f, k, a, e, l, m, g and n): After a Restoration (f, k, a, e, l, m, g and n). After a Restoration (f, k, a, e, l, m, g and n). Gerard Manley Hopkins. The leaden echo and (e). C. Day Lewls. Is it far to go? (a and f). Walter de la Mare. The Ghost (a, j and k). W. B. Yeats. An Irish Airman foresees his death (a): I am of Ireland (b and a): The Rose Tree (a): Imitated from the Japanese (a and b): Sailing to Byzantium (a): Sweet Dancer (c): The Curse of Cromwell (a and c): O, but I saw a solemn sight (a and b): Mad as the mist and snow (a). Read by (a) V. C. Clinton-Baddeley. (b) Marjorie Westbury, (c) Jill Balcon, (d) Caroline Southam, (e) John Glen, (f) Carleton Hobbs, (g) Christopher Hassall, (h) C. Day Lewls, (j) Pauline Letts, (k) Dimitri Vetter, (l) Harry Hutchiason, (m) Edgar A. Vetter and (n) W. Southam. Jupiter JUR00B2 (10 in., 20s. 10d. plus 8s. 2d. P.T.).

One side of this fascinating collection is devoted to Yeats' poems "spoken according to his own directions". We must accept that—or rather I must, not being G.B.S. who allowed himself to make fun of some of Yeats's views on speaking (see Frances Farr correspondence, i.e. "Cantilating"). Actually two of them are sung-and whom would you more happily entrust with that appalling task than Marjorie Westbury and Clinton-Baddeley (the latter is perfectly at ease in singing voice, whereas I find that he carries a little too much "steam-up" in speaking sometimes). Jill Balcon's reading of Sweet Dancer is among the loveliest on this side.

On the other side are poems which gain enormously by being "taken" and acted
—usually by two voices. If A frosty night (mother and daughter Pauline Letts and Jill Balcon) does not immediately tighten your scalp I do not know what will. It is as holding and eerie as a mysterious pas de deux in a ballet. Even more gripping is Hardy's Lulworth Cove, "done" by Day by Day Lewis and Clinton-Baddeley: and for a third choice, the latter with Pauline Letts Is it far to go? (How Berlioz would have doted on that, how to set it to music!)

A whole 12-inch of such duets would be

Recording: sound. Sleeve-notes: just the minimum required, though really most of us could do with fuller details, I suspect. A ghost of pre-echo haunted my review copy (which would have thrilled W. B. Yeats!).

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Stevenson. Julian Barry, Stevenson.

Directed by Howard O. Sackler. Philips Caedmon TC1081 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

This single disc is well recorded and is accompanied by the text (almost faultlessly adhered to). Mr. Meredith enacts the hero with a fresh and likeable attack and sounds both moved and moving in the last stages. There are no failures among the other speakers, who have plenty of individuality. I like the timbre of their voices. While it is sometimes demonstrably not quite what they might call "Briddish-English", it is never aggressively American. You will hear the short or Doric "a" sometimes as in "ask"; also "leeshure" for leisure, as in Dryden; an occasional phrase such as Discretion's "First of all", which is not how an English actress would say it; and, to point to one more tiny example, the word "spouse" is made to rhyme with "mouse", not with "vows", as the O.E.D. would advise. I question, too, such little points of scansion as giving "blessed" two syllables in the line "That I may appear with that blessed host". But these are as nothing to the positive virtues—the reverence, freshness and effectiveness of the presentation. P.H.-W.

CLASSICAL REISSUES

ERNEST ANSERMET. La Valsa (Ravel). Paris Conservatoire. Decca CEP565 /7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 34d. P.T.). From LXT2966 (4/54). ATAULFO ARGENTA. Capriscio Espagnol, Op. 34 (Rimsky-Korsakov), L.S.O. Decca CEP566 /7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 34d. P.T.). From LXT5333 (7/57). RNS ROSBAUD. The Swan of Twombals: Bolero (Festivo) (Sibelius). Berlin Phil. D.G.G. EP130126 /7 in., 19s. rlus 4s. 34d. P.T.). From DG17025 (12/56).

11s. plus 4s. 3jd. P.T.). From LXTS333 (7)67).

HANS ROSBAUD. The Sons of Twosals: Bolero (Fastivo) (Sibelius). Berlin Phil. D.G.G. EPL30126 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8jd. P.T.). From DG17025 (12)56).

FERENC FRICSAY. Overtures, Il Signor Bruschino; Tastrasi (Rossin). Berlin R.I.A.S. D.G.G. EPL30270 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8jd. P.T.). From DGM19014 (9)57).

FERENC FRICSAY. A Midsummer Night's Dream (Mendelessohn): Wedding March; Scherzo. Berlin Phil. D.G.G. EPL30001 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8jd. P.T.). From DGM19001 (2)56).

PETER MAAG. A Midsummer Night's Dream (Mendelessohn): Wedding March; Dance of the Clowns; Nocturne. L.S.O. Decca CEP556 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3jd. P.T.). From LXTS44 (11)57).

NICOLAI MALKO. Leonors Overture No. 3 (Beethove, Philharmonia Orchestra. H.M.V. 7EP7062 (7 in., 9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7jd. P.T.). From DLT1961 (1)55).

VAN BEINUM. Rosamunds (Schubert): Overture; Entracte in B fiat; Ballet in G. Concertgebouw. Decca LW5340 (10 in., 15s. plus 5s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT2770 (3)53).

La Valse emerges gradually from the

La Valse emerges gradually from the shadows to end in a blaze of light; the dynamic range of the music sets recording problems pretty successfully solved here. The continuously growing character of the music sets interpretative problems too; and to 'these Ansermet's solutions are also pretty successful. Yet the potential effect of the disc as a whole is substantially

lessened by the turnover. The place is chosen well enough, but no music of this character should be expected to survive a stop and re-start, save under a compulsion which no longer exists. The Capriccio Espagnol, for example, suffers altogether less-indeed barely at all-for the music is so sectionalised in the first place as to be almost in separate movements. Under Argenta the L.S.O. give a first-class performance of it, and the recording is very good: this 45 is thoroughly recommendable. And so indeed is Hans Rosbaud's D.G.G. disc. The dark melancholy of the Swan of Tuonela is better known than the gaiety of the Bolero (Sibelius's Bolero'); yet both pieces must surely here have an overwhelming effect. For not only is the Berlin Philharmonic on top of its form, but so too are the D.G.G. engineers, offering a quality of orchestral tone altogether exceptional.

After an expectant introduction, Fricsay turns out to be all impatience when it comes to the allegro of Tancredi; the music, played far too fast, is allowed no time in which even to sound brilliant. Il Signor Bruschino goes rather better; and the recording is everywhere rather good, close to D.G.G.'s best. So it is on Fricsay's Midsummer Night's Dream disc; and here he is not tempted to an excessive speed for the Scherzo, played very neatly. The Wedding March is played with panache and with affectionate phrasing in the middle section; this surely is appropriate. The effect of Peter Maag's Wedding March, however, equally well played, is by comparison a little diminished when its climax is succeeded by the Clowns' Dance, which does not really make a very satisfactory ending. The Nocturne on the reverse suffers from no such drawback; and all three pieces are very well recorded.

Malko allows every point to the Beethoven, sometimes seemingly making rather a leisurely re-start after a pause, but always ultimately becoming exciting in the highest degree. The Philharmonia play splendidly, and the recording, too, is good. The only defect, indeed, is one inseparable from the format-a turn immediately after the first trumpet-call. The Rosamunde music divides very much better, with the Overture on one side of the record and the two bestknown numbers from the incidental music on the other. The playing, under van Beinum, is polished, and the recording good. Towards the beginning of the Overture there is a faint intermittent squeak on a very high G; this, fortunately, happens to suit the music very well.

RL HAAS. Obee, Bassoon and Horn Concerto (Albinoni). Flute, Trumpet and Bassoon Concerto (Scarlatti). London Baroque Ensemble. Pye CEC32026 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3 jd. P.T.). From CCL30131 (2/58). KARL HAAS.

KARL MUNCHINGER. Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 (Bach). Stuttgart Chamber. Decca CEP559 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3]d. P.T.). From LXT5198-9 (8/56).

(8/50).

ENNIS BRAIN (a) Symphony No. 31, "Horn Signal" (Haydn): Allerro and Finale. Brain, Sanders, Chapman, Cursue (borns), Morris (flute). Hurwitz (vlolin), Weil ('cello), cond. Westrup. (b) Divertimento, K.289 (Mozart): Minuet and Adario. Dennis Brain Wind Ensemble. H.M.V. 7ER5096 (7 In., 11s. plus 4s. 33d. P.T.). From (a) HLP18 (12/57) and (b) HLP19 (12/57).

The Albinoni and Alessandro Scarlatti form a most happy pairing of concertos distinctly off the beaten track. The Albinoni is for two oboi d'amore, bassoon, and two horns without strings; it is a predominantly vivacious work which plays down the melancholy of the oboi d'amore and plays up the agility of the horns. The Alessandro Scarlatti, though it does have a normal ripieno string body, is yet unconventional in many other respects, and both concertos are most beautifully played and recorded under the direction of Karl Haas.

Münchinger's Brandenburgs are, on the whole, probably the most generally recommendable set there is, and this version of the Second is extracted most conveniently on to a 45 without any midmovement break. In every respect the performance is a good one, with Paolo Longinotti's brilliant performance of the trumpet part quite outstanding. The recording is a little less happy; satisfactory on the parent disc, it is in this transfer distinctly light in the bass.

The Haydn and Mozart excerpts with Dennis Brain are reissues from Volume VII of the History of Music in Sound. Such, a reissue has the great advantage of drawing attention to the enjoyability of the music quite apart from its historical value; and the enjoyability of the two outer movements of Haydn's Horn Signal Symphony and the two inner movements of Mozart's E flat Divertimento (for two each of oboes, horns, and bassoons) is substantial, particularly when as well performed and recorded as both works are here. In the ordinary way this dismemberment of the music would probably not be acceptable, nor would a spacing which involves the last minute or two of the Haydn appearing on the Mozart side of the record. But where unhappy circumstances preclude the reassembling of the same artists in order to complete the works it is not the ordinary way, and we have good reason to be grateful for the disc as it stands.

ZINO FRANCESCATTI. Violin Concerto in D (Tchaikovsky). N.Y. Phil./Mitropoulos. Philips GBR6512 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.). From AB 13150 (19/85).

ABL3159 (12/56)
DIMITRI MITROPOULOS. Petrouchka (Stravinsky).
N.Y. Phil. Philips GBR6519 (10 in., 20s. plus
7s. 10d. P.T.). From ABL3027 (1/55).
ANTAL DORATI. Pictures from an Exhibition
(Moustorgsky). Concertgebouw. Philips GBR6521
(10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.). From ABR4013
(10/54).

(10/54).

CLARA HASKIL. Piano Concerto No. 23 (Mozart).
V.S.O./Sacher. Philips GBR8518 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.). From ABL3129 (4/57).

HANS RICHTER-HAASER. Piano Concerto in A minor (Grieg), Vienna S.O./Morait. Philips GBR8516 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.). From ABL3224 (9/58).

FRIEDRICH GULDA. Konseristuck in F minor, Op. 79 (Weber). V.P.O./Andreae. Decca CEP567 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 34d. P.T.). From LXT5296 (5/57).

WILHELM KEMPFF. Piano Concerto No. 1 (Liszt).
L.S.O./Fistoulari. Decca LW5339 (10 in., 15s. plus 5s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT5296 (6/55).

Francescatti plays the Tchaikovsky marvellously; and he is very well partnered by the New York Philharmonic under Mitropoulos. As the recording, too, is very good, this Philips reissue obviously makes a highly desirable version of the concerto. Yet so, and in some circumstances even more so, does its parent disc, on which the Tchaikovsky is complete on one twelve-inch

side, and is backed by an equally first-class version of the Mendelssohn Concerto. Petrouchka is a more economical reissue, for it originally took two twelve-inch sides, as it still does in most of its competing versions. But though the New York orchestra and Mitropoulos here put on a breathtaking display of virtuosity (as any orchestra must which is to play Petrouchka at all), the result of their efforts sounds thin and cramped in a recording rather noticeably inadequate for the substantial strain necessarily put on it. Fortunately, the Moussorgsky-Ravel Pictures fare much better in this respect. Nearly everywhere they are quite brilliantly played by the Amsterdam orchestra; and everywhere they are brilliantly recorded, allowing this Dorati version to remain the strong competitor in the Kiev Olympics that it happily always has been.

Clara Haskil gives a clear, unexaggerated account of the Mozart, helped by using an appropriate and not over-long cadenza. She is well supported by the orchestra, to which the recording gives a mellifluous sound, rewarding in the case of many wind passages, though not always making for quite ideal clarity. Similarly, Hans Richter-Haaser plays the Grieg very well indeed; though here there are one or two minor orchestral unhappinesses. Nothing substantial, though, and a good overall recorded tone helps to make this a useful single-disc version of the popular concerto. It is worth pointing out, however, that in the case of both these works some considerable economy may be found to be an offer, coupling preferences permitting, by referring to their parent discs. There each concerto is available on one twelve-inch side, backed in the case of the Mozart by another Mozart concerto, the D minor, and in the case of the Grieg by the Schumann concerto. The Decca reissues more clearly add economic value to the musical value they share with the others. Gulda plays the Weber with clarity and attack, and is very well balanced with the orchestra in a clear recording. Kempff plays the Liszt with considerable refinement, in so far as the term can be applicable; his recording, however, seems in general a little less round and satisfactory than that of the smaller disc. Both the Weber and the Liszt works necessarily turn in mid-stream, but conveniently offer places in which the operation is not unduly damaging.

BRUNO WALTER. Symphony No. 25 (Mozart).
Columbia S.O. Philips ABE10045 (7 in., 11s. plus
4s. 34d. P.T.). From ABR4060 (6/67).
BRUNO WALTER. Missuets from Symphonics Nos. 35.
36. 39 and 41 (Mozart). N.Y. Phil. except No. 36,
Columbia S.O. Philips ABE10022 (7 in., 11s. plus
4s. 34d. P.T.). From ABL3155 (7/57), ABL3161
(11/56), ABL3206 (4/58), and ABL3206 (4/58)
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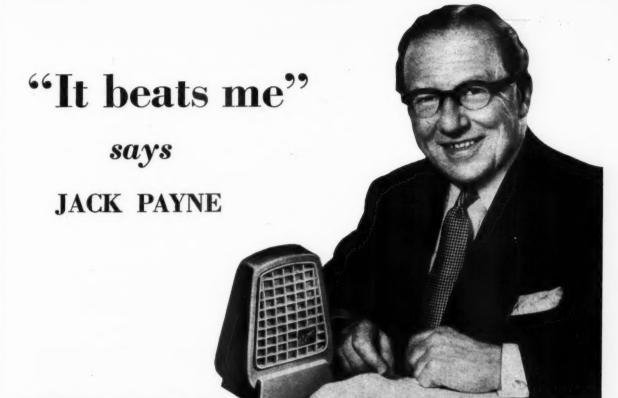
RUDOLF KEMPE. Serenade No. 13, "Eine kleine Nachtmasik" (Mozart). Philharmonia. H.M.V. 7ER5104 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3jd. P.T.). From BLP1098 (11/56).

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM. Symphony No. 3 in E flat, "Eroica" (Beethoven). R.P.O. Philips SBL5233 (12 in., 24s. 3d. plus 9s. 5jd. P.T.). From Columbia 39CX1086 (1/54).

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM. La Chasse de Jeune Henri—Overture (Mehul). R.P.O. Philips' ABE10042 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3jd. P.T.). From ABR4056 (12/56).

Bruno Walter here takes a view of Mozart that, with its little hesitancies and stresses. may be considered by some listeners to be

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rather too definitely on the romantic side. Yet in other respects the performances are good ones, reasonably well if not really very richly or warmly recorded. In the result there is usefully added to the 45 repertory a self-contained version of the Mozart little G minor symphony, and, not quite so obviously usefully, a collection of four minuets extracted from various other and later Mozart symphonies. But the gramophone is, happily, all things to all people, and this particular record may well be just the thing for somebody. Perhaps even there is still lurking somewhere in Europe (or in America?) an academy whose dancing-class teaches its young ladies the minuet; if so, then this is obviously their lucky day. Kempe does not over-romanticise Mozart, and he persuades the Philharmonia into an agreeable performance of Eine kleine Nachtmusik, if not one of any special grace or sparkle. The recording, too, is perfectly satisfactory, but without any startling qualities in a degree which might make the disc's division of the slow movement between its two sides seem more acceptable.

It is good to see Beecham's Eroica back in the catalogues; yet it is a reading that should be sampled before a hasty purchase. He stresses the lyrical rather than the dramatic aspect of the work, and many listeners may find they would prefer more strength brought to bear on the first movement, and more speed on the third(though the horns do play the trio very well). The recording is acceptable enough. Jeune Henri, of course, hunts alone in his field, but even if he did not surely this version would be a winner? For the R.P.O. horns, as it were fresh from the Eroica, now play their hunting calls with even more abandon; the recording is first-class; and the overture lends itself moderately well to a turn in the middle. And with Méhul a comparatively unknown quantity it would be reasonable to wish to experiment with one overture first before essaying the parent disc of

MOURA LYMPANY. Preludes, Op. 28, Nos. 1-10 (Chopin). H.M.V. 7EP7070 (7 in., 9s. 3d. plus 3s. 74d.P.T.). From CLP1051 (1c/55).

MOURA LYMPANY, Preludes, O p 28 Nos. 11-16 (Chopin). H.M.V. 7EP7074 (7 io., 9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7\frac{1}{2}d. P.T.). From CLP1051 (10/55). ARTUR RUBINSTEIN. Preludes, Op. 28 (Chopin).

ARTUR RUBINSTEIN. Proludes, Op. 28 (Chopin).
R.C.A. RB16110 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2\fmud.
P.T.). From H.M.V. ALP1192 (4/55).

RUDOLF SERKIN. Italian Concerto in F major, BWV971 (Bach). Fontana CFE15015 (11s. plus 4s. 3\dagged. P.T.). From Columbia 33CX1110 (11/54).

ALBERT SCHWEITZER. Prelude and Fugue in E minor, BWV533. Chorale Prelude: "O Mensch, bewein" dein" Sünde gross", BWV622 (Bach). Philips ABE10049 (11s. plus 4s. 34d. P.T.) From ABL3134 (9/56), ABL3197 (12/53) (12/67) (R).

To make large collections of small pieces alternatively available in smaller helpings is useful in the case of organised collections as well as of miscellanies. The Chopin Preludes lend themselves well to extraction ten at a time; and it would scarcely be possible to choose a better source than Moura Lympany's set. The playing is musicianly in the highest degree, and the recording warm and intimate, ideally suited to the music. "Alternatively" available is the operative word; obviously also one discholding all the Chopin Preludes has its own special convenience. Rubinstein's per-

formance of the complete set is magisterial, poetic and fiery by turns (the last sometimes in unnerving degree). Yet with all its virtues it is scarcely to be considered competitive, in its R.C.A. reissue, on account of substantial defects in the recording. This is nowhere very full or well toned; and a previously acceptable degree of background noise suddenly increases to the distinctly unacceptable for *Preludes* Nos. 19 to 21. For *Prelude* No. 22 the background recedes again, but with it so does the music.

Serkin's recording of the Italian Concerto suffers from no such prohibitive defects. Yet, made at the Prades Festival of 1950, it is scarcely warm or intimate, and is rather on the thin side. The playing, though, is clean and fluent, with only an occasional rhythmic licence to distinguish it from the strictest of Bach styles. The Concerto lends itself readily to the 45 format in that no mid-movement break has been found necessary, the potentially hazardous long slow movement being conveniently succeeded by a short finale. Schweitzer plays the Bach organ pieces on his instrument at Gunsbach, in Alsace. The effect is as of largely uniform registration throughout: moderately full for the "Little" E minor Prelude and Fugue, rather rounder and softer for O Mensch, bewein', one of the loveliest of the chorale preludes. The playing is highly characteristic; it would scarcely be possible to imagine a coupling more suited to represent Schweitzer's Bach in a small general library than this economical and well-recorded disc.

MARIA CALLAS. Norma (Bellini): Mira, O Norma; In mia mano. Stignami (m. 40p.), Filippeschi (tea.), La Scala, Milan/Serafin. Columbia SEL1596 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3\d. P.T.). From 33CX1179-81 (11/54).

BIRGIT NILSSON. Aids (Verdi). Ritorna vincitor. Qui Radames verra. Philharmonia/Ludwig. Columbia SEL1594 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3jd. P.T.). From 33CX1522 (4/58).

JOAN HAMMOND. (a) Swor Angelica (Puccini): Dying thus without a mother's blessing; (b) La Forza del Destino (Verdi): Pace, pace, mio Dio Philharmonia/Curiel. H.M.V. 7ER5105 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3§d. P.T.). From (a) BLP1086 (10/56), (b) ALP1407 (11/56).

DONIZETTI. L'Elisir d'amore. Quanto e bella. Una furtiva lagrima. Una parola, o Adina. di Stefano (tenor), Gueden (soprano), Florence May Festival Orch./Molinari-Pradelli. Decca CEP570 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3\darksquare. From LXT5155-7 (3/56).

LISA DELLA CASA. (a) Ariadne auf Naros (R. Strauss). Es gibt ein Reich. V.P.O./Holfrelser. (b) Dons Giocasnis (Mozart). Crudele. . Non mi dir. V.P.O./Krips. Decca CEP571 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 34d. P.T.). (a) From LXT5017 (4/54), (b) from LXT50277 (4/57).

DPERA CHORUSES. (a) Pagliacci (Leoncavallo).
Bell Chorus (with del Monaco). (b) Madame
Butterfly (Puccini). Humming Chorus. (c) Otello
(Verdi). Fuoco di giola. (d) I Lombaris (Verdi).
O Signore, dal tetto natio. Chorus and Orchestra of
the Santa Cecilia Academy, Rome[Frede. Decca
CEP564 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3\d. P.T.). From (a)
LXT5223-5 (11/56), (b) LXT2338-40 (2/52), (c)
LXT5009-11 (1/55) and (d) LXT5186 (6/56).

ELISABETH SCHWARZKOPF. Wiegenlied (R. Strauss). In dem Schalten meiner Locken (Wolf). Elfeniad (Wolf). O du liebs Angeli (Swins Folk Song). Galtiti (Swins Folk Song). Moore (plano). Columbia SELISBS (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.).

KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD. Jeg elsker dig. En drom Med in prinsula veris. Hytten. Fra Monte Piscio (Grieg). McArthur (plano). Decca CEP563 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 34d. P.T.). From LXT5264 (6/57).

The first of this group is one of **Callas's** finest records: that is to say it contains two magnificent scenes from one of her great recordings. Though there is Ponselle (with Telva) in the earlier duet (and perhaps R.C.A. will bring this out soon), we have

to go back to Russ with Guerrini (Virginia, not Adriana) to find anyone who handles this particular part of the score with imaginative insight and artistry at all comparable to Callas's. The duet with Pollione is even more terrific. Phrase after phrase—"Giura, giura" (con furore represso); "Sì, sovr' essi alzai la punta" (con pianto lacerante); "D'esser madre mi poss'io dimenticar" (abbandonandosi); "Adalgisa" (trills, con furore)—imprints itself indelibly.

I have an idea that Birgit Nilsson's first record, from which the two Aida arias are taken, may become in time a collector's piece. There is a Boninsegna-like splendour about the stream of tone, so shining, so reliable. Occasionally I feel a slight qualm about pitch: Mme Nilsson's voice is so pure and steady that there is not the usual "latitude" a little way each side of the note that most sopranos can get away with. A flow of tone is what is missing from Joan Hammond's singing in the next disc. Some over-intimate effects, little cooing parlandos or, for example, a breathless whisper on "fatalità", detract from performances which are otherwise conceived with much artistry and well vocalised.

On the Elisir d'Amore disc I have struck—in my copy—one of the increasingly rare examples of faulty manufacture. The side with the two tenor arias on it is off-centre, so that the pitch sways. Heard out of context like this, Di Stefano's Nemorino makes a rather heavier-going impression than in the complete (and enjoyable) set. The duet, labelled as "Una parola, o Adina", is of course "Chiedi all'aura lusinghiera" with introductory recitative—a beautiful piece, words as well as music—and Gueden is charming. Di Stefano, for that matter, is far more graceful than one could deduce from his heavier roles, though sometimes his ornaments are somewhat vague.

"The Voice of Lisa della Casa", as the record is unattractively billed, does indeed show off her beautiful voice, but in two arias which lie just outside her effective range from a dramatic point of view. However, it is beautiful and accomplished vocalisation (barring the feeble low A flat of "Totenreich"), and enjoyable as such. The Mozart side is recorded with a better balance between voice and orchestra; and Hollreiser conducts the Strauss rather feebly.

The sleeve of CEP564 shows the Covent Garden Chorus in the storm opening of Otello, but inside it is indeed "Fuoco di gioia" and the Rome choir, and the other choruses, well sung in a spacious recording.

A pity that the lovely Schwarzkopf recital should have been vulgarised with the title Songs you Love. No one today can match her in her exquisite treatment of Strauss and Wolf: the two Swiss songs are also delightful and whet the appetite for Maria Ivogün's H.M.V. reissue on EP, announced for release this month. Perfect recording of the new disc. Highly recommended. The Flagstad EP will be most welcome to those daunted by the thought of the whole LP of Grieg songs.

BRUNO BRUCKMANN. Solo Cantata "Die Landiust" (Telemann). Geebel (harpsichord), Ermeler (flute). Haferland ('cello). D.G.G. Archive EPA37089 (* im., 12a. plus 4s. 8jd. P.T.). From APM14025

Haferiand (19210). D.G.W. Allawe Errando (7 in., 12a, plus 48. 84d. P.T.). From APM14025 (11/55).

KIM BORG. Concert Arias. Mentre ti lascio, o figlia, K.513: Per questa bella mano, K.612 (Mozart). Ortner (double bass), Bamberg S.O./Letiner. D.G.G. EPL30092 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 84d. P.T.). From DGM18210 (12/57).

AFJE HEYNIS. Alto Rhapsody (Brahms). Royal Male Choir "Apollo", Concertgebouw/Beinum. Philips ABE10077 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 34d. P.T.). From GBR6590 (11/58).

KATHLEEN FERRIER. Alto Rhapsody (Brahms). London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra/Krauss. Decca CEF569 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 34d. P.T.). From LAT2860 (2/54).

HANDEL. Messiak. Comfort ye... Ev'ry valley: And the glory of the Lord: For unto us a Child is born: Then shall the eyes. . He shall feed his flock! Come unto him): Behold the Lamb of God: He was despised: Hallelujah: I. I know that my Redeemer liveth: Worthy is the Lamb: Amen. Thomas (contraito), Morison (soprano), Lewis (tenor), Huddersfield Choral Soc., Royal Liverpool P.O. Sargent. Columbia 33CX1613 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 84d. P.T.). From 33CX1146-8 (5/54). HANDEL. Massiah. And the glory of the Lord: For unto us a Child is born: His yoke is easy: Lift up your heads: Hallelujah: Since by man came Death: Worthy is the Lamb: Amen. L. P.O. and Choir/Boult. Decca LW5342 (10 in., 15s. plus 5s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT29214 (5/54).

LW5942 (10 in., 15s. plus 5s. 16d. P.T.). From LXT29214 (5)64. (5)64. (5)6. (6

Master Bruckmann sings the little Telemann solo cantata with assurance. Kim Borg is sound, but a shade stodgy in the Mozart arias. The second, composed for Gerl, Mozart's first Sarastro, is the one with double-bass obbligato ("the two soloists", says Paul Hamburger, "give the impression of two serenading swains whose corpulence has never yet hampered them"). I wrote about Aafje Heynis's performance of the Alto Rhapsody too recently for any further comment to be necessary; it is good that it should be available now by itself in so convenient a format. The same applies to Kathleen Ferrier's glorious performance of the Brahms work-and by some skill the Decca engineers have made this recording sound better than ever before. Special praise for providing, on the sleeve, words and translation of the Rhapsody-would that this were done more often.

Highlights from Messiah, if the phrase be allowed, is a less extensive selection than on the Decca one-disc abridgement, LXT5383. Nine numbers are common to both. The new Columbia contains three numbers not in the Decca ("And the glory"; "Behold the Lamb of God"; "Amen"). But the Decca contains the Christmas sequence (Nos. 14-17), "How beautiful are the feet" "Why do the nations", and "The trumpet shall sound", which are not in the Columbia. The new disc offers a solid, excellent performance in the traditional style.

The new Decca MP of Messiah choruses shows that this music need lose nothing in power, while gaining a great deal in clarity, when performed by a relatively small choir. The choral divisions in "For unto us" and "His yoke is easy" (both of them adaptations of Italian duets) are particularly well realised. An excellent sleeve note by Arthur Jacobs also includes all the words. This attractive record should help to solve Christmas present problems.

The blazing, indescribably grand Toscanini performance of the Missa Solemnis needs nothing more than grateful welcome. In its new form it is well packed, in sleevescum-album, with an essay by Ernest Newman. The Carols on the 7-inch disc are done, unaccompanied, with great proficiency by the Royal Choral Society, in elaborate arrangements; but I like my "Silent Night" to sound more simple. A.P.

DELETIONS-PYE GROUP

COMPILED By F. F. CLOUGH & G. J. CUMING

Another deletion list has been issued, this time by the Pye Group, and with too little notice to enable us to give advance information before the crucial date: in this case October 1st, 1958. The basis of the list is a very severe pruning of the remnants of the older Nixa issues which originated in re-pressing arrangements with a number of American labels. Thus, all the recordings from "Period" have been deleted, including the Starker recordings: Bach Suites, PLP582, 543; Beethoven Sonatas, PLP560/1; Brahms Sonatas, PLP593; and recitals, PLP584, 708. As Starker is now recording for Columbia, we may hope to hear his readings in more finished reproductions.

From "Lyrichord", an interesting item is Cuénod's Elizabethan Love Songs (LLP8037); his Westminster recordings (WLP5085, 5387, 6402) are also going, leaving us without any examples of his artistry in solo songs. The Berlioz Symphonie funèbre (LLP8040) is the only recording, and could possibly remain so. A number of Bach Cantatas are to go, including the only current recordings of No. 198 (WLP5123) and No. 80 (BLP308); Cantatas Nos. 32 and 140 WLP5122) remain available. The deletion of the Fauré chamber-music discs from "Poly-(QLP4007/8) removes the only current versions of the String Quartet, Op. 121, and the Piano Quartet, Op. 15 (the Rubinstein/Paganini Quartet version of the latter having already gone). Even in France these works do not seem favourites in the recording studios, so that new versions may be elusive.

The bulk of the four-figure ex-Westminster list is to go, although the basis of some of the reprieves is rather hard to imagine. Thus, the unusual Mozart Divertimenti for basset-horns and bassoon on WLP5020 and 5022 are deleted, but not the "Trout" Quintet on 5025, despite many later and better-recorded versions. Perhaps the magnet here is Badura-Skoda, as a number of his other discs remain available-for example, the Beethoven Concertos (5209, 5302, 5143, 5114), the Schubert Piano Trio (5188), Chopin Concertos (5308) (5277). But his valuable contribution to the Schubert solo and duet literature has gone (5093, 5047, 6205) and also the Mozart duet Sonatas (5060, 5082, 5069), all of which would be worth rescuing. Other deletions include his Bach Partitas (6303) and the unique recording of the Scriabin Piano Concerto

Edith Farnadi is another pianist who comes off fairly well, as her Liszt and Bartók Concertos stay (5168, 5249) and also the Dvořák Piano Quartet (5337); but her set of the Liszt Hungarian Rhapsodies (6213), currently the only complete version, has gone; and so has the Liszt Sonata (on 5266). Demus, on the other hand, is nearly deleted—not only his duets with Badura-Skoda, but his Goldberg Variations (5241), Franck (5163) and Schumann (5163, 5264); only his Mozart Concertos (5183) and Schumann concerted pieces (5310), offering the only versions of the Concerto Allegro, Op. 134, and the Concertstück, Op. 92, remain available, although he may well continue to appear

on other labels. Tchaikovsky's piano music disappears from the English catalogues with the deletion of WLP5290 and 5330, with some unusual Mendelssohn on WLP5329, and Chabrier and Saint-Saëns on WLP5294. All these last-mentioned discs would be worth picking up by the collector of curiosa. Franck's Les Djims (ULP9099) is unlikely to reappear; this is from the "Urania" catalogue, all of whose recordings are now withdrawn, including the only versions in the English lists of Thais. Werther, and Tannhäuser. All the Westminster sets also vanish, including the Mahler Symphonies (Nos. 7 and 10 being unique), the Bach Mass and Passion Music, the Beethoven Choral Symphony (these under Scherchen), and the Concertos, a three-disc set (WLP6309). Incidentally, the L.B.E.'s collection of unusual Haydn (J. and M.) and Boccherini on WLP5080 has also gone; but new recordings by them (also for the Pye Group) are quite possible. Other unique chamber-music recordings have also disappeared, including the Schumann Op. 41 String Quartets (5166), and further unhackneyed works are the C. P. E. Bach Symphonics (5040) and Gluck's Don Juan (5000). (5028); although early recordings, these can be made to sound reasonably well, if you have enough knobs to twiddle.

An unfortunate series now almost comes to its the Scarlatti marathon effort by the harpsichordist F. Valenti, of which only WLP20015 will remain; this is Volume 6 of the 19 to which the series has so far run in the U.S.A.; and although over there the earlier volumes have been re-cut and re-issued, it may in present circumstances seem a remote possibility here. Other "reprieves" gleaned from the present list are the Dvořák 'Cello Concerto by Janigro (WLP5225) and the excellent recording of the Mozart Serenade, K.361, by the Vienna Philharmonic Ensemble (WLP5229), although their companion disc, possibly an earlier recording, of K.375 and K.388 has gone (WLP5021); more worth securing would be their Beethoven wind music on WLP5262, a pleasant recording of out-of-theway items, and some similiar Mozart (5103).

The only early Vanguard issue to be retained is VLP428, A Musical Box of Christmas Carols, and a similarly seasonable Westminster also remains available (WLP5100—Christmas Carols, Vol. I); the only 10-inch Westminsters to remain are the series by Antal Kocze and his Gypsies; and the only 45 r.p.m. in this part of the catalogue which remains is a song recital by Iana te Wiata (45EP901). Later issues, since the 1955 numbering reorganisation, are not

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Three biographies as Egginto opinior names Kleiber fault is Phyllis Smith's partner ances,

PASSING NOTES

By ARTHUR JACOBS

Italian and Russian opera are twin pillars for Boris Christoff. The issue of the new recording of Verdi's Simon Boccanegra (reviewed in this issue) coincided with his appearances as Boris Godunov in Covent Garden's first Russian-language presentation. At the Scala, Milan, where they prefer to make opera comprehensible, he sings the role in Italian. Covent Garden under Kubelik used the authentic Moussorgsky text, but, as possessors of the recorded version under Dobrowen know, Christoff also sings the version made by Rimsky-Korsakov when undiluted Moussorgsky was thought to be too strong a brew.

The Boris-Boris identity is a gift to publicists. But Christoff told me in London that there was yet another Boris in his life. When still a law student in his native Bulgaria, he was singing a solo in a church one day and was picked out by King Boris, who later arranged for him to have a scholarship for study. He chose to go to Italy, and has ever since made it his home. He is now thirty-nine. He spoke with pride of his recorded album of the complete Moussorgsky songs—already issued in France and America, and to be reviewed in these pages next month—in which he himself wrote the printed commentary on each song. He is shortly to sing the title-role in Rossini's Mose; in several Italian theatres. (A clue to a future recording?) Modern music appears to interest him little as a performer, and I translate literally what he said to me on Wagner: "I adore Wagner, but not for singing."

It is true that you can see seagulls in Manchester (I was brought up there and I know), but I am not divulging a confidence in saying that it was the recording engineers who brought the seagulls' cry into the new record called "Shanty-O!" and performed by the boys of Chetham's Hospital, Manchester. Revisiting Manchester recently I learnt that a dormitory, with its bedding and hangings, proved an acoustically suitable recording room.

Gerald Littlewood, who conducted the record which is reviewed on page 327, tells me surprisingly that the harpsichord which is included in the accompaniment was made in the Hospital's workshops.

In the days before paralysis put his left hand out of action, Gyril Smith once announced at a recital that he had not had time to learn the Burlesque No. 3 by Bartók, "so I'd like to play you the John Ireland Rhapsody". Afterwards an admirer reminded him that he has actually made a record of the Bartók work. He had completely forgotten—just as Cortot, once, could not be convinced he had ever played Rachmaninov's Third Piano Concerto until someone proved it with press-cuttings.

This is only one of many stories in *Duet for Three Hands*, Cyril Smith's absorbing autobiography (Angus and Robertson, 18s.). With the assistance of an able journalist, Joyce Egginton, he has admirably blended memoirs, opinion, and humour. There are a few wrong names ("Lipati" for Lipati, "Erik" for Erich Kleiber, for instance) but the only serious fault is the lack of an index. Cyril Smith's wife, Phyllis Sellick, contributes a chapter. Mr. Smith's gallant recovery, which has kept the partnership intact in three-handed performances, is modestly touched on. Miss Sellick surprisingly told me the other day that the

partners have not yet been invited to record in their new role.

After concluding an intense period of more than two weeks' recording in London, it was perhaps ironic that the American conductor Alfred Wallenstein should talk to me of the "harm" done to musical appreciation by records. In his view, the harm arises because record-collectors become habituated to so-called performances which are, in fact, the results of many different "takes" spliced together and edited; and so, when they hear a concert in the flesh, they expect a similar "perfection" which is impossible in real life.

About his forthcoming records, anyway, Wallenstein says that there will be "fluffs". They will sound like real performances. But, although he shows in conversation a suspicion of the encroaching power of the sound engineer in the field of music, he still thinks that a common terminology between musician and engineer needs to be evolved, so that one would

not need (as at present) to translate "decrescendo" as "decay".

The Royal Marine guide who took me and a few hundred other sight-seers over Nelson's Victory at Portsmouth omitted one slice of history: that both Mr. Gilbert and Dr. Sullivan (as they then were) trod those decks. They were preparing H.M.S. Pinafore—which is this month's new addition to Sir Malcolm Sargent's G. and S. recordings, although a delay in the availability of pressings makes a review in this issue impossible. John Cameron ("Captain Corcoran"), who has taken part in all these recordings, recalls another G. and S. connection: it was a benefit performance of Ruddigore (he sang Sir Roderic) in Sydney which helped to raise money to send him to England. The rivalry between the Sargent and the D'Oyly Carte recordings lends new interest to the D'Oyly Carte's London season which opens this month.



Boris Christoff as Boris Godunov

[E.M.I. photo]

NIGHTS AT THE ROUND TABLE

By W. A. CHISLETT

The monaural version of "Vienna Holiday", played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, under Knappertsbusch, arrived at the very last minute for review in the June issue but hurried as my listening and my note had to be I was enthusiastic. Subsequent hearings have made me more so and the stereo version now available (Decca LP SXL2016) is, as I expected, better still. There is a glorious sweep of sound and Knappertsbusch has nearly, if not quite, the same sensitive feeling for the music of Johann Strauss I and II and their successors, Komzak and Ziehrer, as Clemens Krauss revealed in his lovely "New Year Concerts" series. The titles are: Radetzky March, Bad'ner Mad'ln Waltz, Annen Polka, Accelerations Waltz, Lristsch-Tratsch Polka, Wiener Burger Waltz, Lrichtes Blut Polka and Tales from the Vienna Woods Waltz.

The Rosenthal arrangement of Offenbach's music for the ballet Galid Parisiems has become very popular with the recording companies. Here it is again, on the first D.G.G. stereo disc to come my way, played by the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Paul Strauss (LP SLPE133001). This is very pleasant sounding indeed with excellent spread and solidity. The playing seems to aim at richness of tone rather than brilliance and I have heard more incisive playing in the livelier

One of the finest monaural LPs I have heard for some time also comes from D.G.G. but more and more do I wish that this otherwise so thoughtful and enterprising company could be persuaded to publish sleeve notes that are adequate and helpful. Here are a dozen Russian songs, most if not all of which are folk songs (no composers' or arrangers' names are given) and all we are offered is a brief, platitudinous dissertation on Russian folk and popular music in general followed by a list of other avail-able choral records. The Russian State Academy Choir, conducted by A. W. Sveschnikov, is a magnificent body of singers. For the most part they sing straightforwardly but in Polka, which is wordless, the choir imitates pizzicato strings with quite remarkable skill and telling effect. The basses are rich and ripe, the sopranos are gloriously clear and the middle is beautifully balanced. Moreover the intonais beautifully balanced. Moreover the intona-tion is a marvel of accuracy. This is a superb disc (D.G.G. LP DGM19019). The titles in order of singing are: Bequest, The Lonesome Wanderer, The Prisoner, Through the deep, mysterious Taiga, O mighty Dneiper, From faraway, Don't blame me, don't scold me, Winter, jolly winter, The Cranes, Under the Ancient Oak, The Moon in the Sky, Polka and Friends, let's spend a jolly

Rudolf Kempe has the true and significant gift of the truly great conductor. He is able and willing to lavish the same care and affection on good light music as on that of the supreme masters. From his magnificent Die Meistersinger of February last and his subsequent Brahms symphonies he now turns to "Nights in Vienna" which contains the overtures to Suppé's Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna, Heuberger's Der Opernball, Strauss's Die Fledermaus and Reznicek's lively Donna Diana, Josef Strauss's Sphärenklänge Waltz, his father's Radetzky March and Lehâr's Gold and Silver Waltz on H.M.V. LP ALP1637. This is superb in every way, warm, intimate, beautifully phrased and poised and very finely recorded. How good in particular it is to hear Lehâr's charming waltz given a full dress performance complete with prehude and postlude.

Given a fair chance a Tchaikovsky record by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra should sound very well too (Philips LP SBL5229). My copy, only an advance test pressing, is, alas very badly warped, but even so it is obvious that Capriccio Italien, 1812 Overture and the Slavonic March, Op. 31 all sound excellent, making due allowance for the defect. The string quality is silky or keen as occasion requires and brass and woodwind are very bright and clear. Added to the above longer works are, by way of makeweight, the "Waltz of the Flowers" from the Nutracker Suite, the waltz from the Serenade for Strings (taken from ABL3200, reviewed in March last) and the "Andante Cantabile" movement from the Quartet No. 1 in D (taken from NBE11011, reviewed in January 1956).

With "Philharmonic Pops" played by the Sin-fonia of London, conducted by Robert Irving I am much less pleased (H.M.V. LP CLP1225). Of the eleven tracks the best are those in which the music as conceived by the composer has been monkeyed about with the least. Even in the most straightforward of the arrangements, however, there is not much subtlety in the playing. Massed G strings for the great air by Bach are reasonable enough in these days, though Bach's own idea of how this should be played is still, perhaps not surprisingly, better, but an arrangement by Don Banks of the "Flight of the Bumble-Bee" with the harpsi-chord to provide the buzzing may sound all right in theory but in practise is neither good enough to be effective nor bad enough to be funny. Douglas Gamley's jazzed up arrange-ment of *Tambourin Chinois* is lamentable. It robs it of all its delicacy. Not only is it very poor are other undesirable features in this record, but I content myself now with listing the remainder of the titles: Polonaise from Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin, Hungarian Dance No. 1 in G minor, Londonderry Air in Grainger's excellent arrangement, Merry Widow Waltzes (arr. Gamley), Liszt's Etude de Concert No. 3 in D flat major (with the piano solo left intact and merely superimposed on a soft orchestral background provided by Mr. Gamley), Waldteufel's Les Patineurs, To a Wild Rose (MacDowell, arr. Banks) and the famous Can-Can from the Offenbach-Rosenthal Galle Parisienne.

My band contribution this month comes from the famous **Deutschmeister Band** of Vienna which was founded nearly 250 years ago and in the nineteenth century was the favourite band of the Emperor Franz Josef. It is quite a small band and in composition, and consequently in tone, differs a good deal from our own military bands. The ten tracks are mostly marches, though not always played in strict march tempo, and are in their way as representative of Vienna as are the waltzes of Strauss and his successors. The recording was made in a building with a long reverberation period and this is a little disturbing in places (Vox LP VX1410).

Stanford Robinson and the Pro Arte Orchestra play a "Tribute to Eric Coates" on Pye LP CML33004, and I am glad that with familiar and well-loved tunes they have included some of Coates's less-known but equally-attractive music. The titles are: London Bridge March, The Enchanted Garden, By the Sleepy Lagoon, Cinderella Fantasy, the Second Symphonic Rhapsody (on "Birds at Eventide" and "I heard you singing") and Footlights Waltz. A most enjoyable disc with deft and incisive playing

that would have pleased Mr. Coates, and recording that is full and forward.

"Palm Court Concert" is typical of the best of the concerts broadcast by Max Jaffa and the Palm Court Orchestra with Jack Byfield and Reginald Kilby, and Jean Grayston (contraito) in a couple of very agreeable solos. Need more be said? This team is the supreme purveyor of music which is good enough to listen to attentively but not such that one feels guilty if accompanied by desultory conversation and a slight rattle of tea or coffee cups. The titles are: The Vagabond King, Waltzing in the Clouds, The Lark in the Clear Air, Rose of England, Enough Tears and Sadness, Beautiful Dreams, The Great Waltz, Forgotten Dreams, Countess Maritza (Czardas), On Wings of Song, The Last Rose of Summer and the Bach-Gounod Ave Maria (Columbia LP 338X1107).

Operettiss and musical comedy are represented by Strauss's Gipsy Baron (Vox LP VX1600) and The White Horse Inn by Benatzky and Stolz (H.M.V. LP CLP1205). The former is played and sung by the Chorus and Orchestra of Hessian Radio, Frankfurt, with a group of soloists about whom I know little but who are imbued with much of the Viennese spirit which counts so much in this delicious music. The recording level is very high and the sibilants tend to hiss a trifle, but this can easily be overcome by the application of a bit of top cut. In the latter the soloists include Andy Cole, Mary Thomas, Rita Williams, Charles Young, Peter Regan and Barnay Galbraith and with them are the Rita Williams Singers and the Tony Osborne Orchestra. I find Andy Cole a little wobbly and over-sobby, otherwise he is good and his colleagues are excellent. A very good all-round performance of a delightful show, the story of which Richard Tauber once told me was based on fact.

"The Immortal Percy French" delights me (Col. LP 33SX1113). Here are a dozen of his songs, many of which will be unknown to the younger generation, sung by Brendan O'Dowda and accompanied by the Philip Green Orchestra. Percy French died in 1920, as the result of overwork during the first war and overmuch travelling in days when this was a real ordeal. I only once heard him in the flesh. He was a man of tremendous energy and great versatility. He might equally well have become famous as author or painter if he had not decided to combine composing with entertaining. It is not generally known that as a youth he wrote Abdul Abulbul Amir and, alas, sold it for £5 and failed to copyright it. Others made the fortune from it that should have been his by rights. Percy French is remembered by most for Phil the Fluter's Ball. Brendan O'Dowda includes this, of course, in his selection and the others are Slattery's Mounted Fut, The Mountains of Mourne, Whistlin' Phil McHugh, Gortnamona, Come Back Paddy Reilley, McBreen's Heifer, The Emigrant's Letter, Eileen Oge, Father O'Callaghan, Are you right there Michael and Donnegan's Daughter.

This year's Christmas LPs are noteworthy for including a great deal of unfamiliar or comparatively unfamiliar, but none the less attractive, music. Supraphon issues one devoted to two works based on the carols of Czechoslovakia — "Bethlehem" by Vaclav Trojan and "Czech Christmas Carols" by Karel Haba, sung and played by the Prague Radio Children's Chorus and Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bohumil Kulinsky (LP LPM328). Trojan, born in 1907, with an opera and other stage music and several chamber compositions to his credit, is best known for his film music. Haba, born in 1893, is a voluminous composer of works in which he employs the half, quarter and even eighth





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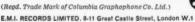
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Comfort ye; Ev'ry valley; And the glory of the Lord For unto us a Child is born; Then shall the eyes He shall feed His flock; Behold the Lamb of God He was despised; Hallelujah! I know that my Redeemer liveth Worthy is the Lamb; Amen 33CX1613

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tone systems. Both composers are greatly concerned with their native folk music. modern arrangements are, perhaps, not for everyone but, after several playings, I find that both works wear extraordinarily well, and with

familiarity become quite fascinating.

More for the general palate is "Hallelujah" a group of fourteen airs and carols associated with Christmas arranged for orchestra and played by Percy Faith and his Orchestra. Starting with the great Handel tune from which the record takes its name and ending with the equally well-known Christians, Awake there are, in between, many rarely-heard but beautiful items (Philips LP BBL7278). Lastly Liane gives us sixteen "Christmas Songs" on Vanguard LP PPL11015, mostly well-known ones of German origin, but she tends to croon them rather than sing them, which will doubtless please some as it will irritate others.

I have a jorum of EPs, if I may be forgiven the expression, and so I must discuss them very briefly. Starting with those specifically designed for the Christmas season there are four which should attract large sales for sentimental as well as musical reasons (Fontana EP TFE17067-There are either four or five popular hymns or carols on each, sung by the Girls Cheral Society of the Royal Normal College for the Blind, at Rowton Castle, Shropshire. The voices are beautifully fresh Shropshire. The voices are beautifully fresh and clear, the articulation is extremely good and the choir is well drilled and sings sensitively. Played on stereo equipment I was surprised to find how near I could get to a true stereo effect which is a tribute to the quality of the recording. All royalties from the sales of these records are to be given to the Royal Normal College. Fontana also offer a charming record by a mixed choir. It is called "Silent Night" but includes half a dozen other titles and the choir is the Harmony Choristers, conducted by Lehman Engel (EP CFE15010).

Campion is a new label and the first record is "Shanty-O" (EP RRV1001). Chetham's Hospital is a famous and old-established school in Manchester with a great musical tradition and this EP is made entirely by them; they provide not only soloists and chorus but orchestra. "Shanty-O" is an arrangement of a number of familiar shanties plus the Victorian ballad The Mermaid in a form akin to the ballad operas of the seventeenth and eighteenth The arrangement was made by centuries. Gerald Littlewood who also conducts and it was first performed in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester a few months ago. I have found this little jeu d'esprit thoroughly enjoyable. (See also "Passing Notes" on page 325.)

The voice of Maria Perilli is of pleasant quality but is too unsteady for my liking, and her breath control needs attention too. Her 'Nuns' Chorus' from Strauss's Casanova cannot be compared with the Anni Frind version, long ago as it was recorded, and the Bach-Gounod Ave Maria and arias from La Bohème and Madame Butterfly are all available in many recordings (Philips desirable

BBE12209).

God bless the Prince of Wales is not one of my favourite tunes by any means. Of two new versions, inspired doubtless by the recent creation of Prince Charles as Prince of Wales, I much prefer the choral one sung by the Rhos Male Voice Choir on Delysé EP EDP204. Even so, I like better still the two companion pieces Rest Weary Heart and Castilla. Harry Secombe sings the other version and couples with it We'll keep a welcome, Land of my Fathers and All through the Night (Philips EP BBE12207).

Melachrino and his Orchestra enjoy tremendous popularity and their admirers will not be disappointed with arrangements of Clair de lune, Greensleeves, Liszt's Liebesträume (the popular one, of course) and the Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana on H.M.V. EP 7EG8391. In "Marching with the Grenadier Guards" the band, under the conductorship of Major F. J. Harris, plays extremely well. The two marches, Bliss's The First Guards and Bayco's Royal Windsor, are of the ceremonial or concert variety rather than work-a-day marches. One section of the latter is distinctly Elgarian (Decca EP DFE6499). Gwen Catley sings the "Waltz of my Heart" from Dancing Years, "Philomel" from Monsieur Beaucaire and George Gershwin's Love walked in very agreeably to admirable accompaniments by the Pro Arte Orchestra under Stanford Robinson, but is less successful in "Summertime" from Porgy and Bess (Pve EP CEC32007).

Supraphon EP (Suec 817) from the Coppelia Ballet of Delibes reminds me that by some mischance I have omitted a similar D.G.G. record from the LPs. The latter (DG17040) contains five bands—Theme Slave varié; Danse de fête, Valse des heures; Noc-turno; Musique des Automates, Valse lente; Czardas (I have quoted the record labels)and the former just the second and fourth of these (with "Automates" amusingly translated into English as "Automats"). Both are well played and recorded, though not outstandingly

so, and the chief difference is that the Supraphon Prague Smetana Theatre Orchestra treats the music more in theatre and the D.G.G. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra under Fritz Lehmann treats it more in concert style.

A new H.M.V. EP issued under the auspices of the English Folk Dance and Song Society contains Wiltshire Reel, Double Schottische, Dorset Reel, Dorset Triumph and Stoke Golding Country Dance (Leicestershire) impeccably played as usual by the Country Dance Band led by Nan

Fleming-Williams (7EG8398).

New children's records have not met with quite the usual enthusiastic response from my friends in the 6-8 age group. The comment on "Uncle Mac's Favourite Hymns for Children" was "These are what we get at school" (H.M.V. EP 7EG8390) and of two records by Shirley
Abicair the older ones preferred Tumbarumba and Whurlie the Wild Cat, but the youngest observed "I don't like this, it frightens me a bit". All of them quite failed to understand Tumbarumba and the Bunyip (Fontana EPs TFE17063 and 17054 respectively).

My only single 45 gives honest, vigorous and pleasantly straightforward accounts of Keep right on to the end of the road and The road to the Isles by Kenneth McKellar (Decca 45F11064).

CONTINENTAL RECORDS

By LILIAN DUFF

The best record I have heard this month is "Beloved Songs of Israel" (Felsted LP SDL86059). "Songs Beloved in Israel" would perhaps be a more accurate title, for they come from many parts of Europe, linked only by their Jewish origin. The singer is Sarah Gorby, who has for many years been one of the best-known and most talented interpreters of her people. She is emphatically a traditionalist—her full concert repertoire includes Russian, gipsy, Yiddish and Israeli material-and her rich contralto is at its best in songs of peasant joys and griefs in the old countries of Eastern Europe, especially Russia. Of the seven given here, all attractive, I liked best Schalom, Nigun and Katerinke. The orchestral accompaniment, directed by Didier Boland, with Ely Grueberg at the piano, is interesting without being

The four songs in "Souvenir of Venice" (Durium EP U20024) are unusual in that only one of them is sentimental. This is the more remarkable because all four are about that most romantic of vehicles, the gondola. Dove ti va Nineta boy meets girl-in a gondola. In Toni me toca a young married woman complains that she has had enough of her husband's philandering, only to be assured that a gondolier has to please the customers and that she is the one love of his life-whereupon, as the culminating cliché, she confesses that a little gondolier is on the way. Marieta monta in Gondola is the old favourite you hear on regatta days, and the fourth, Quattro Gondole, is too whimsy for my taste though the tune is charming. Bruno Rosettani, Nella Colombo and Flo Sandon's are the singers.

The Marino Marini Quartet (Durium EP U20036) offer four songs, two Italian and two English. (Or should I say American?) Pesca Pasca (translated, pretty freely, as "Don't waste your time fishing, Pasquale") is a gay bit of nonsense telling how the Fishes' Trade Union decide to protest against the bad food used as bait. A good idea might have been more wittily worked out. Dimmi una bugia ("Tell me a lie") is conventionally sentimental. Shine on, harvest moon is chiefly remarkable as showing what young Italians can do to the English language and a pleasant old melody. Cindy, oh, Cindy has the same tune as the Weavers' version of "Pay me my money down".

Those who like Portuguese music will certainly welcome **Julio Guimaraes** and **Artur de Sá.** (H.M.V. EP 7EGC21). They are doing for Oporto and the north what the Odemira Trio have done for the south: they Odemira Trio have done for the south, they have given regional favourites an up-to-date turn without jazzing them up. The songs included are Onde Leva a Moéa, Coradinha, O Rabeção and Zini-Pini-Pini. I liked them all and look forward to hearing more from this

young and promising team.

Two new extended play records give selections from collections already issued as longplayers. "Fiesta Paraguaya" (Philips BBE12201) includes three songs, Mborayjhu Mombyry, Hija de la Luna and Recuerdos de Ypacarai, and an Indian harp solo Misionera. All are available as part of Philips BBR8074, su air available as part of rainips bbRo0/4, but if you don't want a long player, the new selection is good value. The four numbers in "Bravo Becaud" (H.M.V. 7EG8360) are from the long player, "Contes Chantés" (H.M.V. CLPC16). As you may gather from the "Critics' Choice" feature in this issue, I warmly recommend Madame Pompadour and Les Enfants Oubliés. The other two, Passe ton chemin and Je veux te dire, are not to my taste but may be to yours.



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MISCELLANEOUS AND DANCE By JOHN OAKLAND

An asterisk following a 78 r.p.m. number indicates its availability at 45 r.p.m. The numbers are the same with the addition of the prefix "45". Where the 45 r.p.m. number is different it is given immediately after the 78 r.p.m. number.

We can usually reckon on the December records being designed for parties and dances, and this season it seems that the Latin-American cha-cha-cha is the key to the kind of music in vogue. To begin with, then, there is a single by **Nino Rico** and his Orchestra (Oriole CB1463*) of *Rico Vacilón* and a number called simply Cha-Cha-Cha, noisy and ebullient as most of them are. Easier on the (reviewing) ear is Don Carlos' Latin-American Orchestra on Nixa NPT19028, though since this is directed by an Australian, the purists will say it is not the real thing. Instead, they will turn gleefully towards the undoubtedly more genuine, but harsher, record on Starlite EP STEP9 by Tito Puente and his Orquesta Tropical In Cuban Style, though I doubt if Stranger In Paradise by Benny Bennett and his Latin-American Orchestra on Vogue V9119* will please any but the most undiscriminating cha-cha-cha fans. It would surely make Borodin turn even faster in his grave than he did on hearing "Kismet". The reverse is Cha-Cha-Cha No. 5, but though I've never met Nos. 1 to 4, I'll bet they're not that much different.

Latin-America continues to hold its sway over the dancing crowds, not only by cha-cha-cha, either. Perez Prado, "King Of Mambo", has a single on RCA 1082* (Paris and Guaglione) which features his tumultous brasses with an electric organ, and what is called a "Gold Standard" EP (RCA RCX1001) which revives Mambo Jambo and Cherry Pink amongst others without the organ. Then on Fontana LP TFL5020, Xavier Cugat has some Latin music as I prefer it as a listener, without shricking brass, but with soft marimbas and reeds. (More about marimbas later.) Further. Don Amoré and his Orchestra take a Latin Holiday very pleasurably for me on Camden LP CDN109. This is not at all raucous, either—but I wonder if Don Amoré is Geoff Love by any chance?

Even if it isn't, that gives me a good introduction to mention Mr. Love's newest LP. It is on Columbia LP 33SX1111, and is called Thanks For The Memories, a cavalcade of Oscar-winning film tunes. Nothing very original in the idea, as Eddie Fisher sang a similar set on H.M.V. (now deleted), but the non-vocal presentation is rich and satisfying, and of course the tunes are all old favourites.

Just now I mentioned the marimba. This Mexican wooden instrument of the xylophone family seems to be featured increasingly in our big orchestras. Frank Chackefield uses it to good purpose in My Heart In Portugal on Decca F11070*, though incidentally I prefer the romantic massed violins in the reverse, Love By Statility; it is heard in You Belong To Me by Frank de Vol and his Orchestra in a very clever set called Portraits (Philips LP BBL7253), which includes musical allusions to Jo Stafford (this one is hers), Rosemary Clooney, Johnnie Ray, Frankie Laine, Mitch Miller and others; and even the Betty Smitch Group use it behind the leader-girl's rich tenor sax. in Begin The Beguine and Song Of The Boulevards (Decca F11071*). I must say again how I welcome the marimba: it has a very satisfying tone-quality that soothes.

I don't think I should want a whole LP of it, though, any more than I do one of the Hammond organ, but if there are those who disagree with me who read this column, they will be glad to know that Robin Richmond has made a new one called Robin's Nest that includes the tune of that name, as well as a wide selection of standard pops, on Nixa LP NPL18022. My own choice for an attractive organ record would fall on George Wright's impressions of "My Fair Lady" on the Wurlitzer organ on Vogue EP VA160129. He gets tones and colours out of that instrument that can be really delightful.

Those addicted to the shrill squawking of the kwela flute will have to hear, and probably buy, Something New From Africa on Decca LP LK4292. It includes the contributions we had a few months ago by Little Lemmy and Big Joe, but the rest is pretty samey. The banjo still holds its admirers, too, and for a rousing party record Columbia LP 33SX1108 presents the Big Ben Banjo Band in some jolly chorus numbers, three to each track. I can hardly recommend anything better, unless it were a similar, but less voluminous affair, on H.M.V. EP 7EG8389. This has the Al Conte Quartet in a further set called Mr. Piano And Mr. Banjo.

THE MONTH'S CHOICE

Frank de Vol Orch. Ron Goodwin Orch. Ted Heath Music Paul Weston Orch. Pat Boone Mitch Miller Bing Crosby Philips BBL7253 Parlo, PMC1065 Decca F11063 Philips BBL7268 London HAD2127 Philips BBL7268 Fontana TFR6012

I think perhaps the best record for dancing is Fontana LP TFR6020, on which Lester Lanin provides music for the New York upper set At The Tiffany Ball. I think that those who buy Glenn Miller's A.E.F. Band (R.C.A. LP RD27096) will do so out of blind loyalty and devotion to the late leader rather than because it is danceable, or even particularly good listening; the recording is still pretty groggy after fifteen years, and the surface noise definitely perceptible. Miller's one-time arranger, Ralph Flanagan, once had a very good carbon-copy of the Miller orchestra on H.M.V., but he now turns up again on London LP HAP2131 with They're Playing Our Song, a set of rather ordinary standards played by the leader on piano with (for the most part) a rather ricky-tick rhythm, while Ray Ellis attempts to better his Christiannamesake Conniff's efforts and fails for lack of the terrific Conniff precision (I didn't like the wandering alto sax. by Gene Quill very much, either, but the wordless chorus is O.K.) on Fontana LP TFL5027. It's called Let's Get Away From It All.

Yes, let's—how far shall we go? To the exotic lands of Spain, Italy, Australia, Japan, as portrayed on Columbia LP 33SX1112 in Jet Flight by Norrie Paramor and his Orchestra, with his usual colourful imagination and technique (but shame on the sleeve design, how about the Comet!), or to uncharted planets Out Of This World, vivid impressionism by Ron Goodwin and his Orchestra (Parlo. LP PMC 1065)? The Goodwin disc is really a must—the chilly Moon, the ridiculous Martians On Parade, the rising and sinking of the Sun—all these make for interesting listening over and over again.

Thrown in for good measure by the same orchestra is Parlo. EP GEP8699, with four numbers taken from existing singles, including the delicious Elizabethan Serenade. Of course, we could get away from it all like the Scottish lass on Decca LP LK4287, and go to Capri and perhaps get involved like she did in a holiday romance, to the music of Bob Sharples. I think I might remark that Estrellita is a Mexican, not Italian, song, but it's a small point; all the familiar standards are there, such as Santa Lucia, 'O sole mio and Funiculi, Funicula. The last-named also is included on Capitol LP T936, a beautifully sung set of serenades and nocturnes, done without accompaniment by Fred Waring's Pennsylvanians. It seems a bit out of place, this rumbustious marching tune, in a set of nightsongs, but there's no denying the beauty of the singing.

singing.

Ted Heath (Decca F11063*) has two more Italian songs, both treated non-vocally of course, both top hits, and both given a superb arrangement—Volare and Come Prima. Volare is treated as a march, and it is not quite as successful as the beautiful sound on the other side. Both these are eminently danceable, though; they are at least as good as Billy Vaughn's orchestra on London LP HAD2120 in Sail Along, Silv'ry Moom, which is just an average American band with a good beat. For something a little more romantic, there is Tony Osborne and his Orchestra in Hands Across The Table, each number connected by a visible scroll and an audible harp glissando; neat, that. It's on Camden LP CDN104. Although this is an American label, it's a British orchestra for all that, and one we can be very proud of: the same label presents (on CDN107) Ronnie Ogden's Orchestra, which I assume is American, and it too is very pleasing in a more sophisticated set called Hits From Hollywood. You know what to expect.

The other instrumentals provide some diverse listening indeed. There is another couple of brilliant trumpet solos by Jonah Jones on Capitol 45-CL14939 (Night Train and Lots Of Luck, Charley), and some sleepy piano from Pierre Dorsey, with nicely subdued strings and woodwinds in two exotic numbers on Vogue V9120*. There is a sophisticated set of cocktail party piano music in impeccable taste by Peggy Cochrane on Parlo. EP GEP8704 and a pocket piano concerto by Mantovani and his masses of strings in Only Yesterday, and of course musette-accordions in Under Paris Skies, an old-style waltz, on Decca F11068*. Lastly, there are two LPs of Jerome Kern's music. The choice of tunes is almost identical and as obvious as a brick wall; George Feyer at the piano, with orchestra (Vox LP VX1260) serves his music up overdressed and rather involved, non-stop, while Paul Weston, on Philips LP BBL7268, is much more interesting, each number scrolled, and the arrangements have body and soul. In fact, this is one of this month's most satisfactory orchestral records.

Now let's see what vocal records are worth hearing-and some that one should beware of. One very peculiar disc is hardly a vocal, but it's not purely instrumental. It is the 1958 equivalent of an old record I had as a child on which someone told a ghost story. It was dead corny; this is more sophisticated, of course, being by Alfred Hitchcock, who compères with Rabelaisian humour a programme of Music To Be Murdered By on London LP HAP2130. It is amusing and witty, if you can take the rather highly flavoured setting, and the fact that tunes like After You've Gone and Body And Soul are treated in minor-key mysterioso style. London night-life, on the other, brighter, hand, has inspired Decca to issue a non-stop recording made in the Astor Club of Verdi (as the sleeve says, no relation) and Jimmy Silver's Music on LP LK4290, but the band is weak and the

piano only fair, though the background noises give the necessary local-colour effect. Nixa, not to be outdone, include the Astor, the Colony, the 400 and everywhere else that is anywhere in the West End on LP NPL18023. Paul Adam's is the only band worth a second hearing; Hutch sounds like a cross between Noël Coward and Al Jolson, and the rest could be any nondescript cabaret bands and singers. Fontana, too, give us a glimpse of London by night by introducing the blind pianist and cabaret singer **Peter Gray**, on EP TFE17050. His style of singing and playing is a bit on the heavy side, but he does not obtrude. A singer with a better sense of rhythm, though, is Dutch Van Wood who sings in Italian to his guitar and rhythm section on Philips EP BBE12206 four typical Italian cabaret songs.

Pat Boone's latest attractive mixture of sentiment and beat is on London LP HAD2127 and bears the title Stardust. It includes a fine version of that song and others of similar high quality, sung in a manner to match. And there is also Mitch Miller's Male Choir on Philips LP BBL7258. Even old-world sentiment like Till We Meet Again is given a rich, full-throated treatment, and it thrives on it. A similar piece of masculinity, with overtones of light comedy, and quite a sizeable injection of nostalgia, comes on H.M.V. EP 7EG8396, whereon the Four Sergeants recall World War II Songs, and on Philips EP BBE12210 the Kirby Stone Four

sing Lullabies Of Broadway with zest.

Before going further, there are several Christmas records, of course. You will have to be a pretty hard-baked supporter of Anglo-American goodwill to take easily At Christmas Time by Teresa Brewer and her children on Coral LP LVA9091; it strains the goodwill feeling rather severely, I find. (A single like The Hula Hoop Song and So Shy on Coral Q72340* is as much as I can take of Miss Brewer's oblique tones as a rule.) Gary Miller sings of The First Christmas Day à la Belafonte (Nixa N15164*), while that celebrated artist has two singles of his own on RCA 1084* (The Son Of Mary, to the tune of Greensleeves, and a rather dreary thing, I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day) and 1085*, which has the placement of the state of the s 1085*, which has the pleasing, if inevitable Silent Night, and the ridiculous Twelve Days Of Christmas. But unless you can honestly say you like fine old Christian hymn-tunes like Hark, The Herald Angels Sing and The First Nowell played as fox-trots by a very ordinary dance band, you may forget about Lawrence Welk's Champagne Music on Coral LP LVA9090.

Just to remind us that there are other things than Christmas in the calendar, Bing Crosby fairly belts out In The Good Old Summertime on Bruns. 05760*, and backs it with that attractive ballad Love In A Home; he also is represented in some more flashbacks to his younger days on Fontana LP TFR6012, which includes Please, How Deep Is The Ocean and Did You Ever See A Dream Walking? Whoever else may have sung these, and there must have been many back in 1932, surely no one ever sang them like this. Bing, though, is not the only veteran crooner to have his past raked up and paraded on LP (not that it does him the least discredit, as I have tried to indicate). Frank Sinatra, also, though represented by a bang-up-to-theminute bouncer called Mr. Success (as a title it could be his signature tune) and a very cosy little thing, Sleep Warm (Capitol 45-CL14956), has an instalment of The Frank Sinatra Story on Fontana LP TFL5030, going back to the mid-'forties when one note from him would send the bobby-soxers (as they were called then) into hysterics. Just think—they are probably matrons in their early 'thirties now, but I bet they'll go for this package of nostalgia from their idol, who, to his credit, has proved himself no fly-by-night, but an artist of great versatility. They predict that, in time, our own Tommy

Steele may do the same. I hope so; though Come On, Let's Go marks a reversion to the brash early style that started him going, Put A Ring On Her Finger is a more intelligent and intelligible number (Decca F11072*). If the ebullience of young Mr. Steele is too much for you, you should try the suave, but slightly cutting-edged voice of George Sanders in urbane, sentimental or witty standards on H.M.V. EP7EG8395, or the persuasiveness of Nat "King" Cole in Bend A Little My Way (Capitol 45-CL14937), though I could have been much happier listening to him without the banshee interruptions on this and its backing, Non Dimenticar.

A British coloured artist from the West Indies, Noel Anthony, makes his début with a set of songs that are native but not necessarily calypso on Nixa LP NPT19030; he has a very charming manner and his supporting musicians are able to create the proper setting for Romance Of The

STEREO POPS

Frank Chacksfield and his Orchestra take a "Glamorous Holiday" on Decca LP SKL4016. Or rather, suiting a double-sided disc, two glamorous holidays, short ones: an evening in Paris, and an evening in Rome, with seven tunes from the cafés brought back from each capital. But few cafés manage to make them sound quite as good as this: whether it is a matter of Ca c'est Paris, Santa Lucia, Parlez-moi d'amour, Come back to Sorrento, or any of the slightly less familiar tunes there are some solid strings and neat wind to present the semi-sophisticated arrangements —a sound thrown into relief by an occasional touch of local colour with accordion or mandoline-style guitar. These innocent devices, however, would scarcely have sufficed Martin Denny for local colour on his "Forbidden Island", London LP SAH-U6004. Hawaii appears to be the principal island in mind; the Denny Quartet are resident in a lounge in Waikiki. The music they play, though, mercifully lacks entirely the hula-hula element; instead piano, bass, and two percussionists (in the widest sense) give all the exotic flavour four skilful players can to a repertory of distinctly unusual cast. Primarily the style is, presumably, Polynesian-based; the music it ranges from snake-charming through Oriental jazz-the last at its strongest and least Oriental, oddly or not, in a piece called Sukara by Dai Keong Lee. The more Oriental composers pressed into service include Richard Rodgers, Les Baxter, and Denny himself; tonecolours include all the expected Latin-Americana plus a musette, a Japanese Samisen and several bird-calls unknown to the Toy Symphony. This "Forbidden Island" is certainly off the beaten track musically, and very well worth an exploration.

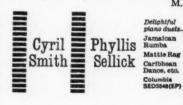
Altogether less original is another London disc, LP SAH-D6003, on which Billy Vaughn plays the Million Sellers. The sleeve-note sets the tone of the record by announcing: "In the world of records, a 'million-seller' is the best there is", a point of view to which this column does not subscribe. And in any case these particular versions of million-sellers are a long way from 'the best there is"; the distance is successively lengthened by the obtrusive off-beat in Holiday for Strings, the concert-party piano arpeggios (and the blatant trumpet solo) in Tonight we love, the relentless horse's hooves in High Noon, and the thin recorded tone of the piano throughout. Yet not all is debit: Around the World makes an inoffensive waltz. Curiously it is the solitary waltz-Kreisler's Stars in my Eyes-which stands out in "Claude on a Cloud", Brunswick LP STA3003. The Claude concerned is Thornhill, and his cloud affords him a dreamy viewpoint for various celestial tunes: When you wish upon a star, Moonlight Cocktail, Stars fell on Alabama, even I Married an Angel. The style of the music is as consistent as its location: throughout the stars primarily illuminate Thornhill's entirely harmless tinkling piano (alas! for the days when that same piano, tinkling rather less, accompanied Maxine Sullivan). The support is agreeably varied; sometimes just strings, sometimes just flutes and clarinets, sometimes both sections together; and always a gentle cloudborn rhythm.

"Have you ever thought of the possible connection between day-dreaming and progress in the science of electronics?" The opening gambit of the sleevenote pulled me up short: I confess I had not. Brunswick LP STA3001, Wayne King and his Orchestra in Dream Time, certainly demonstrates progress in the science of electronics with firstclass recorded sound, and I settled down comfortably to allow some seductive strings and luscious arrangements to induce the daydreaming. But rude awakening came quite soon with an alto sax solo of unbelievable horror: out of tune, out of time, a fierce wobble, everything but the laughing trick. Fascination, the Shadow Waltz, Tammy, and Star Dust were successively ruined by this phenomenon; seeking understanding I turned to the sleeve-note to discover that these H-Certificate moments were played by the leader himself. "Sit back and listen", it concluded, "for Wayne King is about to outdo himself on your phonograph". He does indeed. The "Music from the Films" on Decca LP

SKL4014 is all from the semi-symphonic mould: the Warsaw Concerto, Cornish Rhapsody, Dream of Olwen, and Legend of the Glass Mountain. It is played by Rawicz and Landauer, the most startlingly unanimous two-piano team there can surely ever have been, and the Mantovani Orchestra, casting aside its shimmering for the occasion and offering instead a first-class symphonic sound to the strings. Two pianos and orchestra form an awkward combination that has seldom quite come off: the texture nearly always finds it too easy to get too thick. But here the qualities of the performance and recording, which does not over-emphasise the soloists, make it as successful as it conceivably could be. Two non-cinematic pieces are also included: Mantovani's agreeable Serenata Mantovani's agreeable Serenata Mantovan's agreeate Serenal d'Amore, and—on the strength of its use in Story of Three Loves—the XVIIIth variation of Rachmaninov's Paganini Rhapsody, played most beautifully. The proximity of real Rachmaninov to the sham Rachmaninov of the Warsaw Concerto pinpoints both the virtues and the defects of Addinsell's brilliant piece; but this is not the

place in which to pursue the matter!

"Viva Flamenco!" seems a highly reasonable aspiration after listening to Brunswick LP STA3002. On it Mario Escudero and his company explore all the varieties of the Spanish idiom, from Saeta to Fandango and most of what lies in between. The company musters Diego Castellon on second guitar, Enrique Montoya as a gentle rather than a compelling singer, and Anita Ramos as a dancer with an entirely compelling castanet technique. Contrast is sought not only in variety of idiom but also of colour, which ranges from that of guitar solos by Escudero himself to that of ensembles by the whole company. The result of the "whole company" mustering just four may lead to some fractional lack of excitement in the climaxes, but it certainly also allows the maximum of refinement and skill elsewhere. If refined Flamenço is your goal, here you will most certainly find it. M.M.





De

STAGE AND SCREEN

Living for Pleasure (Addinsell; Macrae). Original
West End Cast. (H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1223—
25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)
Perchance to Dream (Novello). Original West End
Cast. (Decca 10 in. LP LF1309—17s. 3d. plus
6s. 9d. P.T.)

H.M.V., generous enough to cater for a minority by recording an intimate review, have been over-generous in their selection from it. There are four or five numbers in Living Pleasure which would make an excellent EP. Highly recommended are: "Friends", a sketch about two fearsome gossips, in which Patience Collier manages to outshine Dora Bryan, a beautifully polished Edwardian number about two sisters "The Pretty Miss Brown—and the two sisters, "The Pretty Miss Brown—and the other one", and a snappy love song for the 1950s, "Love You Good, Love You Right", where Daniel Massey, Janie Marden and the orchestra (reduced to piano and percussion) are at their best. Elsewhere Richard Addinsell's music, admirable without ever being really exciting, is yawned out by a pit band that is dreary even by English standards. Nevertheless, he and Arthur Macrae must share the blame for three dismal love songs, dismally sung by Miss

Marden. The rest of the show is saved in the theatre by William Chappell's glossy staging and a hysterical mime number for Miss Brvan. The record, of course, has neither and can only be faithful to the mildly amusing material which Mr. Macrae has surpassed so often before. It's all very English-comfortable, conventional and frequently dull.

The recording of Perchance to Dream is nothing if not authentic—six numbers recorded under Novello's supervision in 1945 and issued on 78s now appear on LP. Novello himself is heard playing the piano and speaking lines like, Lydia, you're a warm-hearted creature—I'm not worth a moment's thought", for which he had only himself to blame. The songs include "We'll Gather Lilacs" and "Love is my Reason" sung by the usual Novello ladies.

In a very disappointing month, Elmer Bernstein's sub-Copland music for the film of God's Little Acre on London LP HAT2125 is the most satisfactory issue. Thank goodness for the other Bernstein whose West Side Story will be in London soon after this appears.

MICHAEL COX.

JAZZ N. SWING

Reviewed by

CHARLES FOX, ALUN MORGAN AND OLIVER KING

Ernestine Anderson

Brnestine Anderson

"By Special Request"

My Man: Day Dream: Wrap Your Troubles In
Dreams: Med About The Boy/That Old Feeling:
Love For Sale: Autumn in New York: The Song
Is Ended.
(Nixa 10 in. LP NPT19025—20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.)

Thirty-year-old Ernestine Anderson from
Houston, Texas, one-time vocalist with Lionel

Hampton, makes an impressive début in Britain with this LP. Recorded in Stockholm during 1956, when Ernestine was over there with trumpeter Rolf Ericson's band, it indicates that she is potentially one of the best new singers of the decade. She has a well-developed feeling for jazz and a respect for the songs she has chosen to sing. Unlike the stylists who derive from Chris Connor, Miss Anderson believes in singing the tune as the composer intended; rarely does she resort to mannerisms or melodic butchery. On seven of the tracks she is accompanied by groups of Scandinavian jazzmen, these varying in size from the piano, bass and drums on Wrap Your Troubles and That Old Feeling to the full-blooded swing of Harry Arnold's 17-piece orchestra in My Man. Although she successfully negotiates the octavejumps in Ellington's Day Dream there are indications elsewhere of uncertain pitching; time and experience, however, will probably erase this occasional deficiency. On Mad About The Boy Ernestine receives exemplary support from Ericson's rhythm section—Duke Jordan, John Simmons and Art Taylor, with Jordan taking a characteristically fine solo.

Teddy Buckner and his Dixielend Band

"A Salute To Louis Armstrong"
Potota Head Blues: Black And Blue: My Bucket's
Got A Hole In It: Save It, Pretty Mama: My
Monday Date/Butter And Egg Man: Savoy Blues:
Someday: Squeeze Me: High Society.
(Vogue 12 in. CP LAE12129—275. 6d. plus 10s. 0d. P.T.)
Who said that the "Dixieland" revivalists
were all white men? Here is Teddy Buckner,

once with Lionel Hampton, then Kid Ory, recalling the old days when Louis Armstrong played jazz as it should be played. Buckner is almost too much of a Louis copyist, but most of the music here is worth listening to, and quite worth comparing to the old Armstrong records. The titles have undergone minor changes since Louis' day, but little else has, except that some of the intense heat of the Hot Five and Seven has been exchanged for a greater technical ability—and a cooling down.
O.K.

Bill Bill Broonzy

"Tribute To Big Bill"
Southbound Train: Mindin' My Own Business:
When Do I Get To Be Called A Man: Saturday
Evening: St. Louis Blues: Glory Of Love/it Feels
So Good: Partnership Woman: In The Evening:
Goin' Down The Road Feelin' Bad: Southern Saga.
(Nixa 12 in. LP NJL16—25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

All these recordings were made during Bill Broonzy's visit to Britain in the autumn of 1955, and all have previously been issued on EPs. In The Evening, Goin' Down The Road and Southern Saga (actually Joe Turner Blues) were even issued so recently as to get reviewed in THE GRAMOPHONE last April. As a matter of fact, those three tracks, recorded at a party given by Cassell to launch Broonzy's book, "Big Bill Blues", are the finest on the LP, particularly *Joe Turner Blues*, sung very soberly and with great feeling.

Otherwise I fear that Bill Broonzy was not at his best on these tracks, his voice somehow slacker and lacking the edge one associates with his finest work. It is rather a shame because for once he had been given an ideal recording balance and he plays the guitar as superbly as he always did, imbuing the instrument with more power and swing than anybody else in the blues field. In fact Bill creates more swing on his own than all seven of the musicians who accompanied him in It Feels

So Good and Southbound Train, "Between Bill Broonzy and jazz musicians", writes Humphrey Lyttelton on the sleeve, referring to a different occasion, "lay a deep-seated incompatibility." Certainly that was true, and this lack of rapport becomes quite apparent on these two tracks, even though the band included such distinguished sidemen as Bruce Turner, Dill Jones and Phil Seamen.

As is so often the case with the blues, several of these songs turn out to be already familiar under other titles. When Do I Get To Be Called A Man, for instance, has the same melody—and a similar kind of "message"—to Black, Brown And White, while Partnership Woman fits new lyrics to the tune of Five Foot Seven and Hollerin' And Cryin'.

Ray Charles
"The Great Ray Charles"
The Ray: My Meiancholy Bauy: Black Coffee:
There's No You/Doodlin': Sweet Sixteen Bars: I
Surrender Dear: Undecided.
(London 12 in. LP LT215134—27s. plus 10s. 6jd. P.T.)
"Son," Clarence Williams once said to the
writer, E. Simms Campbell. "The blues
regenerates a man". Certainly they have regenerated jazz, time and time again. Indeed, the most significant development of the past twelve months has been the way in which many modern jazz musicians have started going back to early blues and gospel songs, borrowing from them or else adapting them to their own ends.
Ray Charles is another musician who lets us hear the old-style blues within a modern context, even if in his case the situation is less remarkable. Although none of his vocal records are yet available over here, Charles enjoys a big reputation as a blues-singer in the United States. Once a member of the Five Blind Boys, performs-so I am told-with the fervour of the gospel singer.

Certainly the twin influences of gospel music and the blues come out in Ray Charles' piano playing and are glimpsed most clearly on two of these tracks, Black Coffee, a very earthy blues performance, and Sweet Sixteen Bars, in which the pianist exploits triple-rhythm and uses the sustaining pedal in a way commonly found in gospel music but never in jazz. Judged by these tracks alone, both of them trio performances, Ray Charles must be ranked as a blues-pianist

of exceptional quality.

On the other titles Ray Charles is heard with his regular band, a group of musicians whose names are virtually unknown over here yet who perform with great verve. In particular I would recommend David Newman, heard playing robust tenor solos on *Undecided* and *Doodlin*' and who switches to alto for a faintly satirical treatment of My Melancholy Baby. Joseph Bridgewater is heard less often, but his delicate trumpet work, all of it muted, is subtle and effective. Most of the arrangements were written by Quincy Jones, one of the best being his version of Horace Silver's Doodlin'.

Kenny Clarke Quartet
Now's The Time: The Squirrel/Stompin' At The
Savoy: Four.
(Columbia 7 in. EP SEG7830—8s. plus 3s. 14d. P.T.)
Tenor-saxist Lucky Thompson is the star of
this record, aided by a supple, swinging
that is a supple of the savoning Martial Solal. rhythm section comprising Martial Solal, Pierre Michelot and Kenny Clarke. Using Using four good jazz themes that have withstood the test of time, Lucky creates rich-toned, melodic solos in the manner of a present-day Chu Berry. He is especially impressive in Charlie Parker's Now's The Time. It is significant that a musician of Thompson's calibre can fashion within three minutes music of greater value than lesser men seem capable of producing over both sides of a twelve-inch LP. I trust E.M.I. will now consider releasing Lucky's A.B.C.-Paramount albums, on which he is supported by Oscar Pettiford.



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Dorham Fats Nas with the to be pa worship; more pe attacking best reco his fluen material ballads. Larue, Bu ancestry

this instr Lone Wit Rollins' in the Pettifordunflaggin **Eddie Condon**

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Everybody's Movin' (V Rex Stewart): Eddie And
The Milkman: St. Louis Blues.
(M-G-M 12 in. LP C768—25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)
The truculent, slyly sentimental brand of

Chicago jazz hawked around by Eddie Condon and his cohorts over the past twenty years has rarely endeared itself to me. It years, or so I feel, a little too self-consciously for the speak-easy days. This Eddie Condon LP, however, has delighted me. For one thing it possesses most of the virtues inherent in this kind of music while lacking all-or almost all-of the concomitant drawbacks. Those raucous all-in comitant drawbacks. I nose raucous air-in choruses, for example, once so virile and exciting but now usually stylized in their cacophony—those are happily missing. It is also good, if a little bizarre, to find Rex Stewart playing trumpet (or is it still a cornet?) in this company, for in my memory Rex is always linked with the big bands—McKinney's, Fletcher Henderson's or Duke Ellington's. Rex performs enterprisingly, of course, contributing several startling moments as well as many lyrical ones (his blues-playing in Eddie And The Milkman, for instance).

Other outstanding soloists on the session were Bud Freeman—perhaps the most individual of all white tenor-players, and the trombonist, Cutty Cutshall. Freeman takes typically loose, loping solos in Ginger Brown, Eddie And The Milkman and The Albatross, while Cutshall sounds surprisingly like a gruffer version of Jack Teagarden at the beginning of many of his solos. Also present were Billy Butterfield, Herbie Hall—a bubbling clarinet-tist rather like his brother Edmond, Dick Cary, Gene Schroeder, Leonard Gaskin and George Wettling. Apart from the blues and Condon's own ballad, Wherever There's Love, most of the tunes move briskly, and the LP ends with a rather brash version of St. Louis Blues, obviously designed as a signing-off routine.

Joe Darensbourg and his Dixie Flyers Yellow Dog Blues/Carcless Love. (Vogue 7 in. 45/10 in. 78 V2400—4s. 9d. plus 1s. 10jd. P.T.)

The music here is hackneyed to a degree, it meant less to me than it might have done, but the way it is done, in clean, original style, with a delightful chorus of celeste on Careless Love, goes a long way to compensate for this. Darensbourg, slap-tonguing in Yellow Dog, means little anyway, but his unidentified band slides along right merrily. O.K.

Kinney Dorham

7-8

Failing In Love With Love: I'll Remember April/ Larue: My Old Flame: But Beautiful: La Villa. (London 12 in. LP LTZ-U15183—27s. plus 10s. 6 jd. P.T.)

I have observed with interest the stylistic changes in the work of trumpeter Kinney Dorham. On his early records he sounded like pornam. On his early records he sounded like Fais Navarro; when he came to Paris in 1949 with the Charlie Parker Quintet, he appeared to be passing through a phase of Miles Davis worship; since then he has emerged with a more personal, crackling style and a hot, attacking tone. "Jazz Contrasts" is one of his best records, for it affords a contrast between his fluent method of expression on up-tempo material and beautifully controlled sensitivity in ballads. Betty Glaman's harp is added for Larue, But Beautiful and My Old Flame (Welsh ancestry must account for my predilection for this instrument); on My Old Flame, Falling In Lave With Love and I'll Remember April, Sonny Rollins' muscular tenor sax partners Dorham in the front line. The Hank Jones-Oscar Pettiford-Max Roach rhythm section provides unflagging support, making this a record of consistency and character.

A.M.

Firehouse Five Plus Two

"Firehouse Five Plus Two
"Firehouse Five Plus Two Goes To Sea"
By The Beautiful Sea (V): When My Dreamboat
Comes Home: Minnie The Mermaid: Over The
Waves: A Sailboat In The Moonlight: On The
Good Ship Lollipop/Peoria: Asleep In The Deep:
She Was Just A Saillor's Sweetheart: Between The
Devil And The Deep Blue Sea: Red Sails In The
Sunset: Anchors Aweigh.
(Good Time Jazz 12 in. LP LAG12150—27s. 6d. plus
10s. 9d. P.T.)

Frisky, breezy jazz of the completely uninhibited type that most of us associate with this band. If you've never heard the Firehouse Five Plus Two, this will serve as an excellent example of what they can do, even though I found that the lapping sea, crying gulls and weighing of anchors at the start of nearly every number did get rather trying.

I've always admired this group for trying out new numbers-new to jazz, that is. Like other and more eminent authorities on the subject, I have always maintained that jazz is meant for dancing. It should not be listened to as if it were a Promenade Concert. So what could be better for a jazz band to do than play dance music? And it was for dancing that most of these tunes were originally intended. Admirers of the Modern Jazz Quartet and the late Mr. Parker will disagree, O.K.

Firehouse Five Plus Two

"The Firehouse Five Story, Vol. 3"

"The Firehouse Five Story, Vol. 3"
Chinatown, My Chinatown: South: Lonesome Railroad Blues: Show Me The Way To The Fire: Lovin' Sam: When You Wore A Tulip/Five Foot Two: San Antonio Rose: Southern Comfort: I've Been Floating Down The Old Green River: Mississippl Rag: Runnin' Wild.
(Good Time Jazz 12 in. LP LAG12009—27s. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

Perhaps I've only got myself to blame for saying I enjoyed the Firehouse Five Plus Two, but enough is as good as a feast, and after the first two or three tracks of these, I'd definitely had enough. It's still good time jazz, but there is such a sameness about these that I'm beginning to tire of them. Perhaps in another six months we might have another set, yes? with some numbers on them that are not done by everyone else, though this hardly applies to Mississippi Rag, the oldest rag known, and the most interesting track on this disc.

Ella Fitzgerald

"The Duke Ellington Song Book, No. 2"

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Mood: Don't Get Around Much Any More: Prelude
To A Kias/Mood Indigo: In A Mellow Tone: Love
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(H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1227—256. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

Vol. 2
I'm Just A Lucky So And So: All Too Soon: Everything But You: I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good: Bill-Bilp: Chelsea Bridge/Portrait Of Elin Fitzgerald (Royal Ancestry: All Heart: Beyond Category: Total Jass): The E. & D. Blues.
(H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1228—25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)
Nose: These records are supplied in a two-pocket album. They cannot be purchased separately.

When I reviewed the first part of the Duke Ellington Song Book in October I expressed doubts about the wisdom of putting Ella and the Duke Ellington band in the same recording studio. Not only was I distressed by the lack of rapport between them, I was also disappointed by their individual performances. With this present set, however, I can lean back and praise with an easy and delighted heart. Once again the arrangement is the same: one volume (CLP1228) is devoted to Ella with the Ellington orchestra, the other (CLP1227) to her singing with a small group. In both settings, I am happy to state, she performs like an angel.

I am happy to state, she performs like an angel. For a start, only a couple of songs are scatted; Bli-Blip and Squatty Roo, to be exact, for Chelsa Bridge and E & D Blues really come in a separate category. This time, too, the Ellington band sounds thoroughly confident and relaxed, both the soloists and the ensemble.

Even Paul Gonsalves, whose listless playing disappointed many people during Ellington's recent tour of Britain, can be heard fashioning lithe and often quite delicate solos, notably in All Too Soon, Chelsea Bridge, E & D Blues and parts of A Portrait Of Ella. The latter, incidentally, is a four-piece work performed by the band alone and taking up three-quarters of the last side. Composed and introduced by Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, it attempts to Enlington and Billy Strayhorn, it attempts to provide a musical parallel to various aspects of Ella's personality and work. Two of the sections—All Heart and Beyond Category—were heard at a couple of Ellington's London concerts; the former features tender and melodic trumpet playing by Harold Baker, while the latter—gay and frolicsome—has a long clarinet solo by Jimmy Hamilton and whimsical trumpet work from Clark Terry. Royal Ancestry swings purposefully, while Total Jazz has a startling but very effective Clark Terry solo. The record concludes with E & D Blues, a straightforward, rocking blues performance with Ella scatting in her liveliest fashion and Johnny Hodges contributing a near-miraculous

Once again the small group sides are dominated by Ben Webster, heard on the first side of Volume 1 in the company of Stuff Smith, Paul Smith, Barney Kessel, Joe Mondragon and Alvin Stoller; on the other side Paul Smith, Kessel and Mondragon are replaced by Oscar Peterson, Herb Ellis and Ray Brown, while Stuff Smith is missing. Ella's tour-de-force on this record is Love You Madly, where her audacious phrasing is matched by Ben Webster's ravishing tenor playing. Ella, in fact, sings brilliantly on every track, with the possible exception of Lush Life where her naturally happy, wide-eyed approach cannot really come to grips with Billy Strayhorn's really come to grips with Billy Straymorn's cynical little oeurors. Stuff Smith bows his violin enthusiastically on I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart (wonderfully sung by Ella), Prelude To A Kiss and Don't Get Around Much Any More, while Webster rides in triumph through almost every track, finally surpassing himself on Squatty Roo, where his tone and phrasing sometimes sound uncannily like Johnny Hodges'.

Buddy De Franco Sextet

"Buddy De Franco Plays Benny Goodman"
Benny's Bugle: A Smo-o-oth One: Seven Come
Eleven/Rose Room: Medley (Sweet Lorraine:
Body And Soul: Memories Of You): Airmail
Special: Goodbye.
(H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1215—25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

Buddy De Franco Orchestra

Who Cares: Almost Like Being In Love/Old Devil Moon: Heat Wave. (H.M.V. 7 in. EP 7EG6411—8s. plus 3s. 14d. P.T.)

Although the tunes and the instrumentation recall an earlier era, "Buddy De Franco Plays Benny Goodman" goes no further than that in its emulation of the famous clarinettist and Clearly De Franco's tribute is bandleader. dedicated to the Goodman Sextet of the early 1940's, the group which contained (on record, at least) Georgie Auld, Cootie Williams, Count Basie, Charlie Christian, etc. If this present salute had merely been an attempt at copying the Goodman records, then it would have been doomed to failure from the start; fortunately, however, each of De Franco's men plays in his own style and here lies the strength of the record. Auld provides the connecting link between the sextets of Goodman and De Franco, while Cootie's place has been taken by the effervescent Don Fagerquist. The late Carl Perkins, Britain's Vic Feldman (on vibes), Barney Kessel, Leroy Vinnegar and Stan Levey make up a happy-sounding rhythm section, playing and the treaks great flow and provided the section of the sectio on all the tracks except Rose Room, where Larry Bunker (vibes) and Bob Neel replace Feldman and Levey.

It is good to hear tunes like Benny's Bugle and Seven Come Eleven again; these new versions are

contemporary in style without being insincere Although I can find little in or irreverent. Buddy's own clarinet playing apart from its technical brilliance, I doff my hat to him for the way he copes with the ridiculous tempo of Airmail Special. The Medley allows us to hear six of the musicians in extended rhapsodic solos: De Franco and Auld share Sweet Lorraine. Perkins and Feldman Body And Soul, and Kessel and Fagerquist Memories Of You. Perkins and Feldman are excellent in all their solos on this record, the latter proving himself to be quite at home in transatlantic surroundings. atmospheric Goodbye is played by clarinet and rhythm section only.

The EP features Buddy's clarinet and a healthy-sounding studio band in a set of invigorating if unremarkable pieces. My recommendation, however, is reserved for the LP, which happens to be the best De Franco release I have so far come across.

Russ Freeman and Chet Baker

Love Nest: Fan Tan: Summer Sketch: An After-noon At Home/Say When: Lush Life: Amblin': Hugo Hurwhey. (Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12119—27s. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

Chet Baker, who made some remarkably poor records during his stay in Paris three years ago, is here re-united with the Los Angeles pianist, Russ Freeman, on an LP which I unreservedly Freeman can be a forceful accompanist and his unflagging support brings out qualities in Chet's playing which have remained dormant too long. It seems to me that Chet's solo on Love Nest, a fast, muted performance, is the finest one he has yet recorded, a solo notable for the amount of attack and resolution infused into it. At the other end of the scale, the introspective Summer Sketch and Billy Strayhorn's Lush Life call for great control and a good tone at slow tempo; again Chet rises to the call with honours. The remaining five tunes, all composed by Freeman, are in the brisk style of his earlier Russ Job, Batter Up, etc., and find Baker turning in perkily-phrased solos of merit. Leroy Vinnegar perkity-phrased solos of merit. Zerby bilingar and Shelly Manne play bass and drums respectively, sounding beautifully integrated throughout this consistently fine album. All the tracks were recorded, incidentally, in Hollywood on November 6th, 1956. A.M.

Stan Getz-Gerry Mulligan Quartet
"Getz Meets Mulligan"
Let's Fall In Love: Anything Goes: Too Close For Comfort/That Old Feeling: This Can't Be Love: Bailad. (Columbia 12 in. LP 33CX10120-30s. plus 11s. 8id.

Somebody's slightly grotesque sense of curiosity was responsible for Mulligan and Getz exchanging instruments on the first side of this record, thereby lowering the LP's overall quality. Although tenor was the instrument he started out on, Mulligan is clearly ill at ease with Getz's saxophone and Let's Fall In Love, Anything Goes and Too Close For Comfort are by no means satisfactory. Gerry, one of the finest exponents of the baritone sax in jazz, is frankly inadequate on the tenor instrument, playing with a coarse, uneven tone and some technical imperfections. Getz, on the other hand, survives the transition much more successfully, bringing to the baritone sax a sinuous, linear quality which is not unpleasing despite his occasional tendency to honk out deep-bellied

The reverse of the record shows how well these two men can play together when handling the accustomed tools of their trade. Tenor and baritone achieve a wonderful mood throughout Mulligan's charming Ballad (which bears a superficial resemblance to Baubles, Bangles And Beads) while both men take particularly fine extended solos on This Can't Be Love. Had the whole record come up to the standard of the second side this could have been one of the year's most notable releases. The entirely sympathetic and satisfactory rhythm section comprises Lou Levy, Ray Brown and Stan Levey, with Levy taking some effective piano solos on the second side. A.M.

Tyree Glenn

"At The Embers"
Sinbad The Sallor: What Can I Tell My Heart:
Lonely Moment: After The Rain: Tyree's Tune:
Until The Real Thing Comes Along/Without A
Song: I Thought About You: How High The Moon:
I Wanna Be Loved: Too Marvellous For Words.
(Esquire 12 in. LP 32-061—28s. 6d. plus 11s. 1\(\frac{1}{2}\)d. P.T.)

As one might expect from a musician who replaced the late Tricky Sam Nanton in Duke Ellington's orchestra, Tyree Glenn is fond of choking his trombone with a rubber plunger, a process that produces some of those unusual noises-startling or poignant, as the case may be-for which Nanton was so revered. This aspect of Tyree's playing is represented on several tracks, notably Tyree's Tune and Lonely Moment; in Without A Song he almost carries the trickery too far, the last half of this track degenerating into a ragbag of novelty effects. On many of the ballads, however, Tyree reveals himself as an admirer of the late Tommy Dorsey, playing the melody fairly straight with a smooth, singing tone. In addition, Tyree plays vibra-phone on three tracks—Sinbad The Sailor, I Thought About You and How High The Moon, his style very similar to that of Lionel Hampton.

The group heard on this record is the one Tyree Glenn was leading at the Embers Club in New York at the beginning of last year. It included the pianist Hank Jones (heard playing crisp solos in Lonely Moment and Too Marvellous For Words), Mary Osborne (used mainly as a rhythm guitarist) and the redoubtable Tommy Potter and Jo Jones; a really swinging rhythm section, in fact. On seven of the tracks Tyree is oined by another ex-Ellingtonian, trumpeter Harold Baker, playing for the most part in a subdued, gentle fashion. Baker gets far too little solo space, but manages to sound impressive in Tyree's Tune, I Thought About You and Too Marvellous For Words. C.F.

Bengt Hallberg

"Plano With A Soul"
The Touch Of Your Lips: Where Or When/Little
Man You've Had A Busy Day: So Long Blues.
(Philips 7 in. EP BBE12208—7s. 3d. plus 3s. 10 dd. P.T.)
The American magazine, "Down Beat", once

compared Hallberg's keyboard style to Swedish glass, "very graceful and stronger than it looks". Bengt is certainly one of the most tasteful and elegant pianists I have ever heard, but this dainty manner restricts the range of his emotional expression. He seems incapable of hitting out with vigour and remains always the perfect gentleman. On ballads this is a praise-worthy trait, therefore it is with such material that Bengt is most at home. This record finds him exploring the chosen melodies with grace and care aided on three titles by bass and drums. Little Man is played solo, and this track, more so than any other I have heard by this accomplished young man, reveals the extent of his admiration for the late Art Tatum.

Hampton Hawes

"Everybody Likes Hampton Hawee"
Somebody Loves Me: The Sermon: Embraceable
You: I Remember You: Night in Tunisia/Lover
Come Back To Me: Polka Dots And Moonbeams:
Body And Soul: Coolin' The Blues.
(Vogue-Contemporary 12 in. LP LAC12091—27s. 6d.
plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

The third volume in Vogue's Hampton Hawes series is every bit as good as the first (LAC12056). Most of the pieces Hawes plays are touched by the blues; there is a hint of melancholia and tenseness in even the major-keyed numbers while the influence of Charlie Parker still permeates the music. Hampton's brittle style

and hard sense of touch seem best suited to the faster tempos, for he has a tendency to slide into a saccharine, over-romanticised mood when playing some ballads. Lover Come Back To Me is an amalgam of Art Tatum, Bud Powell and Hawes but the remaining tracks are less eclectic in origin. Billy Boy, the traditional English tune, comes in for a gay, bouncing treatment, also The Sermon and Coolin' The Blues, two blues-based originals. As in the previous volumes, Hampton's colleagues are bass player Red Mitchell and drummer Chuck Thompson.

Tubby Hayes

"The Jazz Couriers In Concert"

What Is This Thing Called Love?: Some Of My
Best Friends Are Blues: The Serpent/Guys And
Dolls: Time Was: Speak Low: Cheek To Cheek.

(Tempo 12 in. LP TAP22-27s. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

Blues For Those Who Thus Desire/Time Was:
The Eighth Wonder.

(Tempo 7 in. EP EXA52-9s. 9d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)

The Jazz Couriers' LP was recorded last
February at the Dominion Theatre. Tottenham.

February at the Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, when the Couriers were working on the same bill as the Dave Brubeck Quartet Although I acknowledge the competence and virility of the Couriers, their ability to play as a team and the way they continually expand their library to create more contrasting programmes, I find myself out of sympathy with this music. I prefer shorter solos (few jazz soloists are capable of sustaining interest over much more than three choruses), melodic lines that are less jagged and angular, and a greater feeling of relaxation. Tubby Hayes emerges as the most consistent member of the group, whether playing tenor sax or vibes.

The EP is another of those multi-taped gimmicks, similar to the recent Art Ellefson EP (Nixa NJE1052). After making some slighting comments about British jazz pianists and the failure of British musicians to blend together, Tubby Hayes (who wrote his own sleeve-note) goes on to explain that "if the saxophone section was me, we ought to be able to play together and likewise, if I played piano behind my own solos I should be able to play the correct backing." In the process of being dubbed playing two altos, three tenors, begitner binner and wither Tubbu express his baritone, piano, and vibes, Tubby exposes his own inability to achieve a perfect instrumental blend; as the piano part of Blues For Those Who Thus Desire was recorded last it is also difficult to understand what sort of help came from this keyboard "accompaniment". Hayes is undoubtedly a versatile and accomplished musician but his first attempt at being a oneman band seems to have been far too ambitious.

Earl Hines—Cozy Cole

"Earl's Backroom and Cozy's Caravan"

Brussels' Hustle: Oooh!: Backroom At The Villa
d'Este (The Earl Hines Quartet/Caravan: Phats'
Blues (V Dicky Thompson): Margle (The Cozy Cole
Control) Septet). (Felsted 12 in. LP FAJ7002—27s. plus 10s. 64d. P.T.)

Mainstream jazz, that area of music lying in between Jelly Roll Morton and Charlie Parker, has enjoyed quite a bit of publicity during the past couple of years, yet some of its performers still find it hard to make a living. Too many people in America, it seems, like only one extreme or the other, either traditional or modern jazz. British jazz fans, however, have reflected the national love of compromise by developing a keen taste for middle-period music, and it was in order to satisfy this local audience that English Decca authorized Stanley Dance, perhaps this country's finest jazz critic and prose-writer, to supervise a series of sessions in New York for the Felsted label. The first results of Stanley's visit can be heard on this LP and on the Buddy Tate record which

is reviewed on a later page.

Apart from Cozy himself, his brother June (who plays piano) and trombonist Walter

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"Phatz" Morris, all the members of the Cozy Cole Septet are young and unknown musicians. Most of them are excellent, particularly Dicky Thompson who sings rather like Joe Turner Thompson who sings rather like Joe Turner and plays good blues guitar; Lou Jones, the trumpet-player, has a lively, mercurial style, while Boe McCain plays ripe-toned, athletic tenor. Phatz' Blues is the outstanding track, containing robust singing by Thompson and good harmonica playing by "Phatz" Morris. Margie, it will be noted, follows the pattern of the famous Jimmy Lunceford recording, while Caravan is the solo in which Cozy was featured during his tour of Britain with the Earl Hines-Jack Teagarden All Stars. It happens, as a matter of fact, to be one of the few long drum solos which I can tolerate.

The Earl Hines tracks form an exception to The Earl Hines tracks form an exception to the series. Instead of being made in New York, they were recorded in San Francisco—at a nine-in-the-morning session!—by the Belgian jazz authority, Yannick Bruynoghe. The music here is superb. There has never been a greater jazz pianist than Hines, who seems capable of always surprising one with the audacity of his musical ideas, and these three tracks must contain some of his very finest playing. Time even seems to have lear power. playing. Time even seems to have lent power to Hines' work, for in addition to the flashing melodic line there is now more fullness, more solidity. The first two tracks are blues, both full of intricate but swinging piano, while Backroom At The Villa d'Este is named after a London restaurant which Hines was fond of London restaurant which Hines was fond of visiting during his stay here. But if Hines is the dominating figure on this side of the LP, praise must also be given to his sidemen—Curtis Lowe, who plays baritone sax rather better, I think, than he does the tenor, bassist Charles Oden and drummer Earl Watkins. C.F.

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Chubby Jackson's All Stars
I May Be Wrong: So What/Leavin' Town: Sax
Appeal.

Esquire 7in. EP EP201—0s. 94d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)
Four excellent tracks by a twelve-piece band which was, to fall back on a grubby cliché, starwhich was, to fall back on a grubby cliche, star-studded. Among the sidemen on the session, held in March, 1950, were Howard McGhee, J. J. Johnson, Kai Winding, Zoot Sims, Gerry Mulligan, Georgie Auld and Don Lamond. Four other titles were recorded at the same time and these are available on another Esquire EP, EP21. I May Be Wrong, So What and Leavin' Town were all scored by Gerry Mulligan, Sax Town were all scored by Gerry Munigan, one Appeal by Tiny Kahn, and good solos can be heard from Mulligan, Zoot Sims and Georgie Auld. All the tracks except Leavin' Town have already been issued here, either on microgroove C.F.

Blind Willie Johnson Nobody's Fault But Mine: If I Had My Way/Dark Was The Night: I'm Gonna Run. (Fontana 7 in. EP TFE17082—9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7 id. P.T.)

The second volume in Fontana's "Treasures of North-American Negro Music", this is, if anything, even finer than the Leroy Carr EP which I reviewed last month. Blind Willie Johnson, who died in 1949, spent most of his life wandering about the streets of Dallas and other southern cities, preaching or singing gospel songs. Bill Broonzy even remembered seeing him up in Chicago sometime during the 1930s. Angeline Johnson, Blind Willie's wife, accompanied him everywhere and it is she who can be heard singing with him on I'm Gonna

Blind Willie Johnson's voice was rough and husky yet extraordinarily expressive, its very harshness containing the most subtle inflections. As for his guitar-playing, it formed the ideal counterpart to his singing, not only answering and echoing his voice but constructing a rhythmic web of sound beneath and around it. The songs which Blind Willie sang were always the earliest kind of spirituals, most of them Negro but a few white in origin. It is also interesting to note that he did not sing in Negro dialect but took his words straight out of the King James version.

As Henderik R. Rookmaaker points out in his sleeve-note, Johnson used two different kinds of tuning on his guitar. One was the "Hawaiian" type, which enabled him to slide a knife-blade along the strings and create the singing effect he uses so movingly in Nobody's Fault But Mine and Dark Was The Night, the latter certainly one of the greatest gospel recordings ever made. Once again Fontana must be congratulated upon issuing four tracks of such aesthetic and

historic importance.

Lee Konitz Sextet

"Lee Meets Miles"
Odjenar: Hi Beck/Yesterdays: Exs-Thetic.
(Esquire 7 in. EP EP202—9s. 94d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)
"Palo Alto"

Palo Alto: Rebecca/Ice Cream Konitz: You Go To My Head.

(Esquire 7 in. EP EP205—9s. 9 d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.).

Lee Konitz always strikes me as being a master of obliquity. He twists through his solos like a silver fish, darting first this way, then that, suspicious of taking anything which looks like a straight line. For that reason, and also because his tone is cold and clinical, I seldom warm to Konitz's music, even when I admire its proficiency. Once again I found myself reacting in this way when I listened to these two EPs, both containing recordings originally released here on 78s.

released here on 78s.

The Quintet tracks date from 1950 and present Konitz in the company of pianist Sal Mosca, guitarist Billy Bauer, bassist Arnold Fishkin and drummer Jeff Morton. The Sextet recordings were made a year later, virtually by the same group except that Max Roach sat behind the drums and Miles Davis was added on trumpet. If I prefer the four tracks by the Sextet—and I do—that is largely because of Miles.

Odjenar and Ezz-Thetic are both relatively involved compositions by George Russell, with Konitz at his most devious; Hi Beck (dedicated to Konitz's daughter, Rebecca) is a fairly free-swinging track, notable for fluent, dry-toned playing by Miles Davis, who also takes an excellent solo in *Yesterdays*. By comparison the Quintet recordings seem much more static and uninspired; the exception is Rebecca (another fatherly gesture), a duet by Konitz and Billy Bauer, where the melodic lines freeze together memorably. C.F.

Herbie Mann

"Salute To The Flute"

When Lights Are Low: Little Niles: Old HonkyTonk Piano Roll Blues: Pretty Baby/Beautiful
Love: Hlp Scotch: Song For Ruth: Noga's Nuggets:

2 Blund.

ontana 12 in. LP TFL5013—27s. plus 10s. 64d. P.T.)
Flautist Herbie Mann is one of the most fortunate musicians to have been thrown up by the recent spasm of recording activity. He has well over twenty LPs to his credit as leader, which, in the light of his limited talents as a jazzman, seems symptomatic of an industry in the throes of an unprecedented boom. This album is superior to many produced under Mann's name, for he has surrounded himself with several soloists of taste and imagination. Recorded at three sessions during April of last year, the titles were arranged by Gigi Gryce, A. K. Salim, Oscar Pettiford, Joe Puma and Herbie Mann himself. The big band tracks, When Lights Are Low, A Ritual and Beautiful Love, feature good solos by trumpeters Don Stratton and Joe Wilder, trombonist Urbie Green, saxophonists Anthony Ortega and Dick Hafer, pianist Hank Jones and bass player Oscar Pettiford. In this context Mann's own solos are more acceptable than usual, but my

opinion of him as a soloist is unchanged; to my mind he is simply a competent dance band musician with an interest in jazz.

N.B.C.'s Chamber Music Society Of Lower Basin Street

Lower Basin Street

Mood Indigo (Dinah Shore with Paul Laval's Wood

windy Ten): Muskrat Ramble (Sidney Bechet with

Henry Levine and his Barefoot Dixieland Philharmonic):

Sophisticated Lady (Dinah Shore, etc.): Basin

Street Blues (Levine's B.D.P.): Star Dust (Dinah

Shore, etc.): Body And Soul (Dinah Shore with

Levine's B.D.P.): Memphis Blues (Leua Horne with

Levine's B.D.P.): Hemphis Blues (Levine's B.D.P.):

Beale Street Blues (Lena Horne, etc.): Aunt Hagar's

Blues (Lena Horne, etc.): John Henry Blues (Levine's

B.D.P.): Careless Love (Lena Horne, etc.)

(Camden 12 in, LP CDN105—19s. 9\dd. plus 7s. 8\dd.

P.T.)

Much of this stuff isn't jazz at all, of course;

Ladmire the Misses Shore and Horne immensely

I admire the Misses Shore and Horne immensely as sophisticated popular-song artistes of the very highest order, but even when accompanied by studio men described with the once-magic word "Dixieland", they never become jazz singers. The non-vocal tracks go a little way towards justifying their inclusion in this column, especially, of course, the one with Sidney Bechet, who is just as good as Bechet can be, but Laval's Woodwindy Ten are about as much jazzmen as the Budapest String Quartet, with or without Benny Goodman. As a worthwhile and very entertaining LP issue, I found this very enjoyable, but as jazz, when Camden can issue so much of the real thing, it just will O.K.

(P.S. to colleague Charles Fox, who did the otherwise admirable sleeve note: There is a recording of Jelly Roll Morton's appearance on this N.B.C. programme. I have it!)

Original Dixieland Jazz Band
"In England, 1919-20 (No. 2)"
Sensation Ragi: Sphinax: Barnyard Blues: Soudan:
Tiger Ragi/Alice Blue Gown: My Baby's Arms:
I've Got My Captain Working For Me Now: I'm
Forever Blowing Bubbles.
(Columbia 10 in. LP 3831133—20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.)
Amid all the welter of hi-fi, stereo and other

miracles of modern science, it is quite refreshing to step lightly back 40 years to the days when the Original Dixieland Jazz Band were to all intents the only real jazz band on records. No coloured band had yet recorded; no one had heard of Louis Armstrong or Jelly Roll Morton, still less of Buddy Bolden and Bunk Johnson. Yet here in our midst, audible and visible every night at the Hammersmith Palais de Danse, were the five New Orleanians who fashioned jazz music out of march music, ragtime, hymns and pops.

They were not above pops; unfortunately, in a different sense, neither were the records they and these extraneous crackles and scratchings are particularly noticeable Sensation Rag, of which no better copy could be found for transfer to LP. The O.D.J.B. also played waltzes, and provide here two excellent examples of how a jazz waltz can sound— blue, even at hot times, with honours going to The music on all the other, more Shields. conventional, numbers is first-rate; it still sounds fresh and it holds the attention, despite the acoustic recording and the other purely technical shortcomings (which, in the main, have been largely overcome). O.K.

Bernard Peiffer Trio

"Piano A La Mood"

Our Walts: Easy Living: You Make Me Feel So
Young: They Say It's Wonderful: Let's Get Away
From It All: Who Can I Turn To?/Last Night
When We Were Young: Easy To Love: Invitation:
Blues For Django: The Song Is You: Goodbye.
(Brunswick 12 in. LP LATS262—27s. plus 10s. 6jd. P.T.)
Like Brunswick LAT8261 ("The Soft Touch"

N. Elli: Laskin) and JAT9263 ("The Mallo

by Ellis Larkins) and LAT8263 ("The Mello Sound" by Don Elliott), "Piano A La Mood" forms part of a new Mood Jazz series. Unlike the Larkins and Elliott releases, however, Peiffer's album contains quality music that is

likely to appeal to discerning listeners; in fact this is the best record by the French émigré that I have yet heard. Restricting Peiffer to a melodic style of playing has actually helped in the creation of superior music; to get contrasting effects the pianist now makes full use of the keyboard rather than confining himself to an octave or so above and below middle-C. The neo-Garnerisms once so apparent in Peiffer's work can no longer be detected and in their place is a more lucid personal style that allows the pianist's considerable technique to be used without being over-indulged. The recording is truly hi-fi; the piano has a beautiful tone and the accompanists (Ernie Furtado and Jimmy Campbell) play skilfully but unobtrusively. Peiffer swings lightly on the medium and up-tempo tracks, introducing some rippling effects in the treble on the slower numbers. The only moments of incongruity occur in David Rose's Our Waltz, which is played, unaccountably, in common time throughout.

Sammy Price Those Mellow Blues: In A Mezz/Gully Low Blues:

Those Mellow Blues: In A Message Cow Cow Blues.
(Vogue 7 in. EP EPV1146—9s. 9ld. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)

Sammy Price, for years staff accompanist to

Sammy Price, for years staff accompanist to produces some useful and attractive blues soli here, mercifully without the irritating attentions of a rhythm section. I feel that their appeal may be rather limited, as piano soli usually are, but to those who know that blues piano is not all hard-hitting boogie, or jangly fireworks à la Atwell, this little record will come as a very pleasant and welcome Christmas gift.

Freddie Redd Trio With Guests

"Get Happy"
Get Happy: Guessin': Studio Blues: Tunnelbanan:
Parewell To Sweden/Dawn Mist: Duo: Beautiful
Adela: Ohio: Blues X.
(Nixa 12 in. LP NJL19-25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)
Freddie Redd is a 30-year-old Bud Powell
disciple. heard previously on LPs by Joe disciple, heard previously on LPs by Joe Roland (London) and Gene Ammons (Esquire). His British record debut as a leader is not particularly auspicious, for he is guilty of uncertain fingering and poor timing. He seems at his best in the slow and medium tempos and his understanding of the blues is exemplified in the opening and middle choruses of Studio Redd makes some harmonic substitu-Blues. tions in the first four bars of the last chorus (he uses the altered blues chords first heard in Charlie Parker's Sippin' At Bells) which seem to have been unrehearsed, for they throw the dependable Tommy Potter temporarily off balance. On Guessin', Tunnelbanan, Duo and Ohio, Redd's trio is augmented by trumpeters Rolf Ericson and Benny Bailey. Bailey is the man Art Farmer cites as the important early influence on his own playing; on this showing, however, he sounds rather inaccurate and generally unimpressive. Ericson emerges as the more constructive trumpet soloist, but the most consistent musician on the record is the underrated Joe Harris, whose fine drumming is always in the best of taste.

All ten titles were recorded in Stockholm over two years ago. A geographical upset appears to have transferred the chords of Indiana to Benny Bailey's composition, Ohio. A.M.

Dizzy Reece Quintet

Variation On Monk" A Variation On Monk"

A Variation On Monk/Sweet And Lovely.
(Tempo 7 in. EP EXAS4—9s. 9]d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)

Dizzy Reece may be an erratic, unpre-

dictable musician, but on his day (and they pop up quite often) he is easily the finest trumpet-player in Britain. He sounds it on these tracks, both made at a session in November, 1957. Originally Joe Harriott was supposed to play on the date, but as he could not be there Dizzy seized the opportunity to another fellow-Jamaican, tenor-saxist Sammy Walker, who plays a light, airy chorus in Sweet And Lovely and a hard, scooping solo in A Variation On Monk, an original by Dizzy himself. The remainder of the group consisted of Norman Stenfalt, Lennie Bush and Phil Seamen, a very reliable trio. On both tracks Dizzy plays at his best, his approach cool but his performance fiercely lyrical.

George Shearing Quintet

"Jazz Conception"
How's Trix?: Bop, Look And Listen: Swedish Pastry: Move: Basic English: Point And Counterpoint: Rap Your Troubles In Drums: Appreciation/Carnegie Horizons: Conception: Good To The Last Bop: Night Flight: Simplicity: Get Off My Bach: Basso Profundo: Mood for Milt.
(M.G.M. 12 in. LP C769—25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)
This album may be considered a companion volume to the earlier "Shearing Caravan"
(M.G.M. C-767) but this time with the accent on iazz. All sixteen tracks were recorded

on jazz. All sixteen tracks were recorded between February 1949 and March 1954 and include such memorable items as Move and Bop, Look And Listen, both of which caused something of a stir when they were first issued. Inevitably Shearing's personnel has undergone on this record the guitarists Chuck Wayne, Dick Garcia and Toots Thielmans can all be heard, while the vibes are handled by Margie Hyams, Don Elliott, Joe Roland and Cal Tjader. The last-named is one of the most individual soloists to have worked with Shearing; here he is heard to best advantage in the dedicatory Mood For Milt.

Financial success has now confined Shearing to a strait-jacket of his own devising, but the freshness of these first quintet records should not be forgotten. This LP is a convenient collection of the better tracks which resulted from his M.G.M. contract. With eight titles on each side it is indeed a bargain. A.M.

Zoot Sims All Stars

"Zoot's Case"

The Red Door: Zoot Case.

(Esquire 7 in. EP EP204—9s. 9\(\frac{1}{2}\)d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)

Of all the younger white tenor soloists, I like Zoot Sims the most. Where many musicians

are inclined to potter about, constructing their solos with finicky care, Zoot bursts through, disregardful and absorbed. On this EP he can be heard in the company of Al Cohn, a tenor player of a similar temperament although one whose ideas I find less interesting than Zoot's. Also on the session were Kai Winding (not at his best, I'm afraid), George Wallington, Percy Heath and Art Blakey. Both tracks were recorded in 1952 and originally issued here on Zoot Case is a fastish twelve-bar blues, while The Red Door is a 32-bar original by Zoot and Gerry Mulligan. C.F.

Buddy Tate and his Orchestra

"Swinring Like . . Tate!"

Bottle It: Walk Ith Walk (V): Miss Sadie Brown/
Moon Eyes: Rockin' Steve: Rompin' With Buck.
(Felsted 12 in. LP FAJ7004—27s. plus 10s. 6\frac{1}{2}d. P.T.)
This is another record in the mainstream

series I mentioned when reviewing the LP by Earl Hines and Cozy Cole. It presents two separate groups; the first three tracks are by Buddy Tate's regular band, with which he plays at New York clubs and dance-halls, the last three by a pick-up group, mostly consisting of ex-Basie sidemen. Although the latter contains the more celebrated musicians, I think I was most satisfied by Buddy's normal group. Stanley Dance has described this as the best regular small group he heard while he was in the U.S. and I can quite believe it. The ensemble work may be a trifle ragged, but there is also much warmth and swing. Of the soloists, I was particularly delighted by Skip Hall, a pianist who has worked for Jay McShann, Don Redman and other bandleaders

and who-according to Dance's sleeve-noteonce led a 13-piece Army band in Somerset during the war. Skip rolls the blues sonorously, sounding especially good in Walk That Way (easiest the finest track on the LP), which also has beautifully supple clarinet playing by Ben Richardson and a set of expansive, leisurely-sounding choruses from Buddy Tate. Miss Sadie Brown is very Basie-like, right down to the brass shakes, and has good muted trumpet work from Pat Jenkins. Bottle It struck me as much less interesting, a fast romp with solos by all the front-line, including some sober trombone choruses from Eli Robinson.

On Moon Eyes, Rockin' Steve and Rompin' With Buck, Buddy Tate is heard with Buck Clayton, Dicky Wells and Earl Warren while the rhythm section consists of Skip Hall, Lord Westbrook, Aaron Bell and Jo Jones. Earl Warren amazed me by the fierceness of his alto-playing; he is an aggressive as well as a very lyrical soloist. Buck Clayton performs delicately and sensitively on the first two tracks but gets a little scrappy in Rompin' With Buck. Dicky Wells, whom I admire above all other trombonists, disappointed me a little, largely because I disliked the rather sour quality of his muted tone; towards the end of his solos on Rockin' Steve and Rompin' With Buck, however, he opens up and roars away in his best style. Skip Hall is hidden a little on these tracks but rolls the blues once more in Moon Eyes, a track on which the group sounds surprisingly like a small Ellington unit. Buddy Tate himself performs throughout the record with enterprise and taste; he is not an exceptionally inventive soloist, but can always be relied upon to play with aptness and vigour, whether rhapsodizing gently or whipping up excitement at a fast tempo. He is, as the sleeve-note says, a con-siderably underestimated musician. C.F. siderably underestimated musician.

Lu Watters' Yerba Buena Jazz Band High Society: Milneburg Joys: Daddy Do: Hot House Rag: Muskrat Ramble: London Blues: Tiger Rag/Fidgety Feet: Come Back, Sweet Papa: Sunset Cafe Stomp: Terrible Blues: Temptation Rag: Riverside Blues: Cake-Walkin' Bables From Home. (Good Time Jazz 12 in. LP LAG12123—27s. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

Much the same can be said of this little lot as I said of the previous set reviewed last month. It's good, jolly, rather unashamedly vulgar good-time jazz of a pioneering type, but it all gets rather wearying after the first twenty minutes or so. And haven't we had some of the numbers before once or twice?

Ben Webster Quintet

"Soulville" Soulville: Late Date: Time On My Hands/Lover Come Back To Me: Where Are You: Makin' Whoopee: Ill Wind. (Columbia 12 in. LP 33CX10122—30s. 0d. plus 11s. 8\frac{1}{2}d. P.T.)

Hard as it is to imagine, I'm inclined to believe that Ben Webster is playing better nowadays than at any time in his career. During the 1930s he was overshadowed by Coleman Hawkins, during the 1940s by Lester Young, but now, although both those great musicians enjoy sessions when they demonstrate all their old brilliance, it is Ben Webster who emerges as the most consistent and creative of presentday tenor players. Instead of getting weighed down by the years, his tone and phrasing seem, if anything, to have got lighter, so that he often sounds as if he were playing an alto rather than a tenor. All of which is by way of preamble to one of the month's outstanding records, a collection of solos by Webster with accompaniment provided by Oscar Peterson, Ray Brown, Herb Ellis and Stan Levey, all recorded sometime early this year.

"There are some piano players that get in your way," Webster is quoted as saying on the

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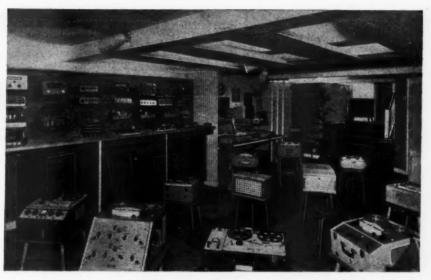


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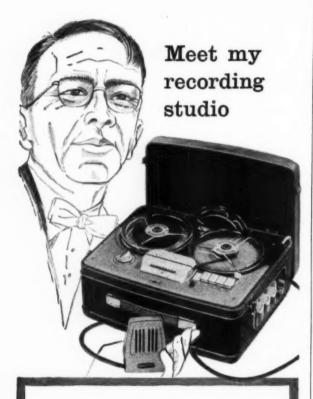
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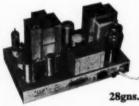


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sleeve-note, "but Oscar never does and so you have nothing to worry about". That is quite true; whatever criticisms I have made of Peterson as a soloist, he is the nonpareil of accompanists. This conjunction of Webster and the Peterson unit, in fact, has turned out to be a very happy one. Perhaps it is on the blues, Soulville and Late Date—one slow, one medium-paced—that Webster sounds at his most paccu—that webster sounds at his most authoritative, sending a genuine frisson up my spine at some points, but that is only a relative judgment for his playing on the five ballads is equally challenging. The tempo never edges above a trot, yet there is no slackening of tension or interest; one of the superb things about Webster, as a matter of fact, is his ability to swing at slow tempos. His tone and phrasing are rich, luxuriant and often very delicate, yet he still succeeds in always sounding muscular and intensely masculine. I cannot think of a better tenor-player in jazz today.

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Close Fit Blues: Dreaming The Hours Away/Red
River Blues: I Need You.
(Fontana 7 in. EP TFE17053—9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7id. P.T.)
All right, you can quietly forget about most
of the other records issued this year and reviewed by me. Just go and buy this one and put it on, savouring it as rare vintage wine of this sort should be savoured. Here is no raucous pseudo-Dixieland noise; no freak effects, no allegiance to any school, nothing except honest-to-goodness jazz, played with all the taste and feeling, sympathy and meaning that marks the greatest performances. Soli by Ed. Allen, one of the finest of all Negro cornetists, Cyrus St. Clair (tuba—and alas, a shade off-key in Red River Blues, but we'll forgive him in view of the excellence of the rest of his work), and Buster Bailey on clarinet (and even Coleman Hawkins putting across a hot chorus on Dreaming)these make the superb foreground, backed by a rolling rhythm section using a banjo and Williams himself at the piano—and no drums.

The originals of these are very rare collectors items. That younger jazz enthusiasts are able to hear them in this way speaks highly of Philips' enterprise, and I sincerely hope we can look forward to more in the coming year. There are plenty of them. (By the way, that delicate muted cornet behind the melody on the second side is King Oliver's. A really all-star band, you see.)

Lester Young

"Blue Lester"

Ghost Of A Chance: Crasy Over JZ: Ding Dong: Indiana: These Foolish Things: Exercise In Swing: Blues 'n' Bells: Salute To Fats: June Bug: Blue Lester: Jump, Lester, Jump: Basic English. (London 12 in. LP LTZ-15132—27s. plus 10s. 6jd. P.T.)

This LP contains recordings made at three sessions for the American Savoy company.

sessions for the American Savoy company. Ghost Of A Chance, Indiana, Blue Lester and Jump, Lester, Jump, on which the tenor saxist is accompanied by Count Basie and his rhythm section, were released over here on 78 r.p.m. couplings by the now-defunct British Savoy label; These Foolish Things, Exercise In Swing, Salute To Fats and Basie English, with Billy Butterfield, Cozy Cole, etc., are still available (under pianist Johnny Guarnieri's name) on London EZ-C19018. All of these tracks were made in the spring of 1944, shortly before Pres eft Basie to join the Army. (The story is that the Army came and took Pres right off the stand one night; he had failed to acknowledge his call-up notice). At this time he was playing particularly well, using a soft, seductive tone and a detached (but not blase) approach to improvisation long before this style was adopted by the young tenor soloists in Woody Herman's band. The titles with Basie, Freddie Greene, Rodney Richardson and Shadow Wilson are minor classics, the ones with Butterfield and Guarnieri only a little less so.

The remaining tracks feature Lester with the sextet he led at the "Royal Roost" club in the summer of 1949. By comparison with the earlier recordings Pres sounds less relaxed angular trumpet-trombone riffs behind his solos and Roy Haynes' explosive drumming are not conducive to lyrical, flowing improvisa-

EP REISSUES

LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS HOT FIVE. No.
The last time: I'm not rough/Got no blues: Yest I'

LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS HOT FIVE. No. 3.

The last time: Pm not rough/Got no blues: Yes! Pm
in the barrel. Philips BBE12195 (7 in., 9a. 3d. plus
3s. 7id. P.T.). From BBL7134 (11/57).

JIMMY DEUCHAR AND HIS PALS. Bewitched/My
Funny Valentine. (Tempo 7 in., SP 45/A167—4s. 9d.
plus 1s. 10/d. P.T.). From TAP29 (0/88).

FIREHOUSE FIVE PLUS TWO. Frankie and
Johnny: St. Louis Bluss/Copenhages: Down
Where the Sun Goss Down. (Good Time Jazz 7 in.,
EP EPG1225—9s. 9d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.). From
LAG12089 (9/58).

HAMPTON HAWES. Volume 2: The Trio. Hamp's
Blues: Carioca/Blues The Most. (Contemporary
7 in., EPC1245—9s. 9d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.). From
LAC12056 (11/57).

HUMPHREY LYTTELTON. La Paloma; Bodega.
(Decca 7 in., 45 r.p.m. SP 45F11058—4s. 6d. plus
is. 9d. P.T.). From LK4276 (10/58).

MURDERERS' HOME. Part One. Rosie; It Makes
a Long Time May: Tangle Blues Eye; Sometimes
I Wonder. Alan Lomax. (Nixa 7 in., EP NJE1062
—9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7dd. P.T.). From NJL11

MURDERERS' HOME. Part Two. No more my
Lawd: Early in the Morning; Whoe Back;
Old Alabama. Alan Lomax. (Nixa 7 in., EP
NJE1063—9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7jd. P.T.). From NJL11

(2157).

ART PEPPER. You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To/

(12/57).
ART PEPPER. You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To/
Star Eyes. (Contemporary EPC1232—9s. 94d.
plus 3s. 10d. P.T.). From LAC12066 (4/58).

BOOK REVIEW

Duke Ellington: His Life and his Music. Edited by Peter Gammond. House, 25s.).

The life and the music of Duke Ellington present two very different problems to the jazz writer. The life merely sets the task of achieving a style racy enough to give some kind of impression of a racy character. This task, at least two of the contributors to this book, Richard O. Boyer and Daniel Halperin, have

performed with merit.

Boyer's piece, "The Hot Bach", wa originally commissioned by the "New Yorker fourteen years ago, but much of its data is still topical. As Boyer's title suggests, the profile contains both the merits and the excesses of the "New Yorker" style, but nevertheless succeeds in achieving what one suspects is a clever and sympathetic caricature rather than a photographic likeness. Daniel Halperin's brand of whimsy is not always as well suited to his material as one often hopes, but on this occasion he has hit off the perfect balance between wit and sincerity. In fact, Boyer and Halperin between them, aided by Stanley Dance's reverent impressions of the Duke, cover the

"life" part of the title more than adequately.
But what of the "music"? As if the various contributors had acknowledged before they began that the task was too immense for them the corpus of Ellingtonia has been dissected and shared among them in rather the same way that the buffalo was divided among the plains Indians. Peter Gammond, Charles Fox, Raymond Horricks and Alun Morgan each take a decade's recordings, and do quite well too. The rest of the musical analysis, however, forces one to the conclusion that the definitive Ellington book is still unwritten.

Mr. Gammond may not have produced the Ellington book, but he can compliment his team and himself on at least having produced the work of reference without which the book can never be written. BENNY GREEN.

IN BRIEF

* indicates a stereophonic recording

*David Allen. A Sure Thing: Dearly Beloved: I'm Old Fashioned: Lovely To Look Al: The Way You Look Tonight File Folks Who Live On The Hill: Long Ago And Far Away: I've Told Every Little Star: All In Fun: In Love In Vain. (Vogue 12 in. LP VA160127—25s. 3d. plus 9s. 104d. P.T.)

My praise for this one-time Boyd Raeburn vocalist's coupling of A Sure Thing/In Love In Vain, which I reviewed in October, is echoed for the whole of this LP, from which those titles were extracted. Allen possesses a voice of real quality, excellent vibrato control and diction, and a good reserve of power. Each of these tunes is sung as a ballad, which is the way Jerome Kern (one of the century's greatest composers of popular music) intended them to be treated, and Johnny Mandell's imaginative and tasteful backgrounds are in sympathy with Allen's voice.

A.M.

Louis Armstrong. "Louis And The Good Book". Nobody Knows The Trouble I've Seen: Shadrack: Go Down Moses: Rock My Soul: Exchiel Saw De Wheel: On My Way/Down By The Riverside: Swing Low Sweet Chariot: Sometimes I Feel Like A Moherless Child: Jonah And The Whale: Didn't It Rain: This Train. (Brunswick 12 in. LP LAT8270—27s. plus 10s. 6½d. P.T.) Louis sings these spirituals in rather a humdrum fashion, only lifting his trumpet to his lips on a handful of the titles, notably Go Down Moses, Down By The Riverside and Motherless Child. The 'All Stars (with Hank D'Amico or Dave McRee replacing Ed Hall on all but four tracks) enter into an uneasy liaison with the Sy Oliver Choir. Rather disappointing, in fact. C.F.

Burt Bales and the Marty Marsala Band. "Jazz From The San Francisco Waterfront". Hisdustans: Tim Roof Blues: Mashrat Ramble Baby, Won't You Please Come Home! (Save II, Pretty Mama: King Porter Stomp. (H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1218—228. 0d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

A boring collection of stale standards played chorus after chorus with occasional "jam session" free-for-all ensembles, with only Bales' piano to liven them up. There ought to be a law against any further recordings of any of these (and certain other numbers) that lasted longer than three minutes.

any of these (and certain longer than three minutes.

Guy Carawan, "Mountain Songs And Banjo Tunes". The Crawdad Song: Charlie (Wesvily Wheat): Sourmood Mountain: Ida Red: The Young Man Who Wouldn't Hoe His Corn: Who's Going To Shos Your Pretty Little Food Railroad Bill: Poor Little Turtle Done: Cindy Cindy: The Three Little Pigs: The Kentucky Moonshiner: Chilly Winds: The Kicking Mule: Whoa Back. (Topic 10 in. LP 10T24—21s. 3d. plus 8s. 3d. P.T.).

Guy Carawan and Peggy Seeger. "We Sing America". Big Roch Bluss: This Little Light Of Mine: Feel Like An Engine: An't No Mo Came On Dis Branos: Ohl Sinner Man/Midmight Special: Weary Bluss: John Gilbert Is The Boat: Cripple Creek: P'm A Stranger Here. (Nixa 10 in. LP NPT19029—20s. plus 7s. 10d.

Pit. (Nika 10 in. LP Nr110029—208. plus 7s. 100. P.T.).
Guy Carawan, a young American folk-singer, who also plays the guitar and banjo, spent some time in Britain earlier this year on the outward leg of a globe-trotting tour. That Carawan's banjo picking is really his strongest point is demonstrated by his work on the Topic LP; he sings white folk songs pleasingly but his treatment of Negro material is far less interesting. On four tracks of the Nixa LP he is teamed with Peggy Seeger, another American in Europe, who is actually a more impressive singer than Carawan, as she shows in Airs' No Mo Come On Dis Brano and This Little Light Of Mine. A couple of the other tracks feature a small accompanying group; apart from some excellent plano playing by Dave Lee, this acts as a hindrance rather than a help. C.F.

this acts as a mindrance rather than a help.

Louis Jordan. "Man, We're Wailin'": Saturday Nigh;
Fish Fry (V): Sunday (V): The Nearness Of You.

I've Found My Peace Of Mind (V): I Never Had A
Chance (V): Got My Mo- Jo Working (V)/A Man Ain't
A Man (V): The Slop: Sweet Lorraine (V): Route 66
(V): The Jams!: I Hadn't Anyone Till You. (Mercury
12 in. LP MPL6641—25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

Louis Jordan's original Tympany Five was one of the
very first groups to play rhythm-and-blues. The present
Tympany Five keeps up that tradition, although greater
stress is laid upon Jordan's singing. The Nearness Of You,
I Hadn't Anyone Till You and I Never Had A Chance are
slow and rather syrupy. The other tracks are mostly
jump numbers, with Jordan's brutal alto solos veering
close to Earl Bostic in tone and style. Dorothy Smith
sings Route 66 without much distinction.

C.F.

Humphrey Lyttelton. Red For Piccadilly: Irish Black Bottom/Old Grey Mars: Blue For Waterloo, (Parlophone 7 in. EP GEP8700—88, plus 3s. 13d. P.T.) A flash-back to the earlier days of Humph, before he had a big band and went in for Latin effects. These still have a freshness that I always admired, and for which I am always pleased when I get a package reminder like this.

O.K.

Shelley Moore. Out Of Nowhers: Too Marvellous For Words/This Mood Of Mine: Dancing On The Ceiling, Starlite? In. EP ST.EP?—99, 94d, plus 38. 104. P.T.). Shelley Moore has chosen four good standard tunes for her second EP release. It is unfortunate, therefore, that

she has adopted the current style of near-jazz singing, which demands that the vocalist moves away from the melody "as written "with all speed. I find this disturbing and, in view of Miss Moore's obvious vocal accomplishments, rather saddening. Personally, I have a predilection for the melody of Dancing On The Cessing just as Richard Rodgers originally intended it to be played. Shelley is accompanied by John Scott's Koool Kats (three o's), a group possessed of good taste and featuring the excellent flute work of the leader.

A.M.

The Mastersounds. "The King And I". Medley (I Have Dreamed: A Puralement: Something Wonderful): March Of The Siamese Children: Getting To Know You: My Lord And Master/Medley (Hello Young Levers: I Whistle A Happy Tune): We Kiss In A Shadow: Shall We Dance: Evilogue. (Yogue 12 in. LP LAE12132—27s. 6d. plus 10s. 0d. P.T.)
Apart from Getting To Know You and Shall We Dance, both fairly free-swinging tracks, this LP is mostly what

Design we Librace: Episogue. (Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12132—273. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

Apart from Getting To Know You and Shall We Danes, both fairly free-awinging tracks, this LP is mostly what its title implies—a set of tasteful and intriguing performances of the Rodgers and Hammerstein score for "The King And I". The fact that the Mastersounds employ exactly the same instrumentation as the Modern Jazz Quartet gets confusing at first, particularly as Buddy Montgomery plays vibes just like Milt Jackson. The arrangements, however, all written by Buddy Montgomery, are more romantic in mood and pattern than anything John Lewis has done. Buddy's brother, Monk Montgomery, plays electric base, while the group is completed by Richie Crabtree (piano) and Benny Barth (drums).

New Orleans Wanderers. Papa Dip: Too Tight/ Perdido Street Blues: Gate Mouth. (Philips 7 in. EP BBE12204—0s. 3d. plus 3s. 7jd. P.T.) Four of the most superb original jazz recordings ever made. What a fine Christmas present to a collector so far without them! If there is a finer, more expressive blues than Perdido Street, I've never heard it. The others are good-time jazz that wasn't a nostalgic looking-back; it was there all around them. Those were the days!

Jack Parnell and his Orchestra. Kick Off: Tobas/Fuller Bounce: Knock Out. (Parlophone 7 in. EP GEP3707—8a. plus 3s. 1 d. P.T.)
These are reissues of standard-speed couplings and reveal the Parnell band as a bustling, energetic combination, generally lacking in shading and dynamics. Kick Off and Knock Out are flag-waving displays with Parnell and Phil Seamen trading drum-breaks on the former. Tobas is a Juan Tizol-like piece of exoticism featuring the pleasing trombone of Laddie Busby, while the relaxed Fuller Bounce contains fair alto, trumpet and trombone solos by, presumably, Bob Burns, Jo Hunter and Mac Minshull.

Bobby Short. At The Moving Picture Ball: The Most Beautiful Girl In The World: Bue Bye Blackbird: I've Got Five Dollars: Pue Got The World On A String: Sand In My Shous/Cariora: Down With Lowe: Hottendor Potentate: Any Place I Hang My Hat Is Home: Bedelia: Fun To Be Fooled. (London 12 in. LP HA-K2123—27s. plus 10s. 6\frac{1}{2}d. P.T.)

Although Bobby Short appeared in London cabaret earlier this year, this is actually the first of his records to be issued over here. Perhaps the easiest way of describing his sophisticated style is to say that Noël Coward might have sounded like this had be been raised in Harlem. Particularly outstanding are versions of two Harold Arlen songs, Down Wilk Low and Pes Got The World On A Siring, the latter testifying to the influence of Ivie Anderson upon the singer's work. A zestful Pres Got Five Dollars is one of four tracks on which Bobby, his bassist and drummer are Joined by trumpeter Pete Condoil. Somehow this singer-planist has a genius for sounding like a smart young man of the Twenties; he does it in a poignant Bye Bye Blackbird, as well as in At The Moving Picture Ball, a real period item, stuffed with cracks about Theda Bara, Mary Pickford and Mack Sennett's Bathing Beauties. C.F.

Jeri Southern. "Southern Breeze". Down With Love: Crasy He Calls Ms: Lasy Bones: Who Wands To Fall In Love: Then Fill Be Tired Of You: Ridin' HighHe Reminds Me Of You: Popy: Are These Really Sine: Ins'! This A Lovely Day: A Warm Kiss And A Celd Heart: Ins'! This A Lovely Day: A Warm Kiss And A Celd Heart: I. Like The Likes Of You. (Columbia 12 in. LP 33SX1110—25s. 9d. plus 10s. Id. P.T.)
Tasteful and musicianly, Jeri Southern manages to be a good singer without ever conveying much sense of presence. Although her accompaniments have been scored by Marty Paich and the soloists 'nclude Herb Geller, Don Pagerquist and Georgie Auld, Miss Southern is not really a jazz singer; nevertheless she performs very agreeably and her choice of material is most refreshing. By an odd coincidence she sings Down With Love, the Harold Arlen song which Bobby Short also performs on his LP. Two of the best tracks are Ridin' High and that good but rather neglected song, Then I'll Be Tired Of You. In several of his scores, incidentally, Marty Paich makes very effective use of the tuba.

G.F.

The Weavers. "On Tour" Trens, Trens: On Top Of Old Smoky: Drill Ye Tarriers, Drill: Filb-mi-eo-re-sy: Over The Hills: Clementins: The Fronse Logger: The Boll Weevil: Taking Bluss: I Don't Want To Get Adjusted: So Long/Michael, Row The Boat Ashore: The Wreck Of The "Join B": Two Brothers: Ragaputi: Wasn't Theat A Time: Go Tell It On The Mountain: Poor Little Jesus: M's 'Malel: Santa Claus Iz Coming: We Wish You A Merry Christmas. (Vanguard 12 in. LP PPL11011-25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

The Weavers never seem to be content to sing and play their native American folk-music; determined to be eclectic, they dip into other traditions as well. On this LP, for instance, recorded at a Christmas-time concert in Carnegie Hall, they include items from India (Ragaputi, Israel (Trens. Trens and Mis 'Y Malel), the Bahamas (The Weck Of The "John B"), Ireland (Over The Hills, Drill Ye Tarriers and Fi-li-mi-on-e-say) and England (We With You A Merry Christmas). From America they pick equally diverse soons, ranging from blues to carols, gospel songs and dust bowl ballads. With such width of repertoire it is understandable that the singers—Pete Seeger, Ronnie Gilbert, Lee Hays and Fred Helleman—never go very far below the surface of the songs. Nevertheless these are very smooth propessional performances.

A more conventional vent treatment is to have 7 in. by 21 in. slots (b) cut in the side faces; and if these are cut at an angle 2 in. from the bottom sloping to 4 in. up. then the tuning will be rather broader than with horizontal vents.

These alternatives are illustrated in Fig. 1, which is drawn to a scale of approximately 1 in. to I ft.

The principal damping arrange-ments are based on the use of papier mâché egg trays so as to form a cellular structure into which strips of plastic foam can be loosely packed. These trays are 12 in. square and six of them stuck together, peak to peak, will form a cube.

From above the will be an unbroken tray. From the side there will be a series of channels; there will also be a similar series of channels at right angles; and these two series will communicate with each other. Strips of plastic foam inserted into one series of

channels will therefore block the other series as well and thus form a compact damping system. If desired, of course, alternate channels can be left open, and many other patterns can be devised. The system therefore permits of a wide variation of damping conditions.

In practice, I have found the alternate system adequate, using strips of foam cut from in. plastic mats which one can obtain quite cheaply.

As resistance damping for the fundamental column frequency I insert one of these 12 in. cubes on edge at the bottom of the column (c) in such fashion that one series of channels is pointing upwards and the other points in the direction of the vents. It is just a push fit and need not be fastened to the column sides in any way.

For the mid-column damping (d) for odd harmonics, I use half a cube only—that is one built up of six half egg trays on edge rather than one built up of three full trays. In this way one series of channels is vertical and the other horizontal between the side faces. The damping strips are inserted in the horizontal channels (where of course they are supported) and in this case it is well to have one in each channel. There is then a complete resistance barrier across the

Another refinement, which. however, I have not yet tried, would be to have 1 in, holes cut in the side faces opposite the horizontal channels in the damping structure. Two rows on each face, each containing three holes, should

For even harmonic damping I take four sheets of plastic foam, each about 30 in. by 12 in., and

COLUMN LOUDSPEAKERS

By OUR TECHNICAL EDITOR

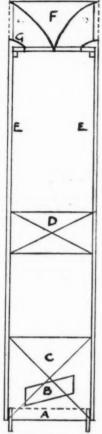
First of all, may I ask interested readers to read through the previous article which was actually written at the beginning of August, though only published last month. The present continuation is being written as I am crossing the Atlantic, and as I have no reference books by me, I must ask for indulgence in the matter of accurate quotation of formulae, etc.

I there indicated that with a column 4 ft. 6 in. long (plus diffuser) and 12 in. square internally, I had achieved a response progressing smoothly from over 10 kc/s down to 30 c/s with its maximum (10 db up) at the latter frequency. The unit was a Wharfedale Super 8CS/AL, but I have had similar success with W/B HF816, 1012 and 1016, the best I think for this purpose being the 816. (A rather longer column would he better, I fancy, for the 10 in. units whose surround resonances are lower-but who wants to go below 30 c/s, anyway?)

The sides of the column are constructed of in plywood. Weyroc might be a little better. Four sheets 54 in, by 13 in, are required and each of the long edges are chamfered to an angle of 45°. These sheets are glued and pinned together along the chamfered edges.

A 1 in. square fillet is glued to each face, 1 in. from one end, and likewise chamfered at the ends, so that when the faces are glued together there is a support all round to which the 12 in. by 12 in. baffle for the speaker unit can be screwed. A circular hole is cut in this baffle board, of course, to suit the speaker unit.

The bottom of the column need not be filled In fact, one successful form of vent is obtained by gluing and screwing four # in. pegs inside each corner so as to raise the column about 1½ in. from the ground: make the distance from the ground as much as this to start with, even though it seems to give four vents, each 12 in. by 11 in., for they are not fully effective unless the column stands on a hard floor, and the pegs can always be shortened, if desired. Alternatively, two of the faces may be cut 11 in. shorter than the other two and thus leave a gap at the floor on each of the sides (not on the front or back) as shown at (a), this method is not suitable for uneven floors.



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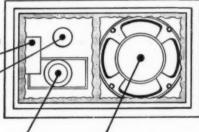
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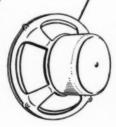


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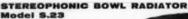
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REPRODUCERS LIMITED SOUND BIRMINGHAM

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Percy Record lights o stick them, top and bottom only, to the faces of the column just below the speaker baffle fillets and just above the place where the mid-column damping will be. The middles will therefore bulge out into the air space (e) and will thus act as damping flaps.

In practice, of course, one fixes the damping flaps first, then pushes up the mid-column damping structure from the bottom and then

fixes the bottom cube last of all.

The speaker unit on its baffle board is screwed down to the fillets from the top. From each corner of the baffle board a $\frac{1}{4}$ in. square is cut out to receive the dowels from the disperser which fits on top of the column. The leads to the speaker unit are taken out through a hole in the back panel of the column, which, however, must be made airtight again with putty, or some such material.

The disperser frame consists of four $\frac{3}{4}$ in. dowels, each 6 in. long, fixed at the corners of a plyboard 13 in. square and $\frac{1}{4}$ in. thick. Round these dowels a grille of expanded metal or of

open-weave tapestry can be fixed.

Various treatments are possible for the reflector (f), which is screwed tight to the underside of the plyboard. I have myself used a square pyramid made of wood and filled with Keene's Cement. The faces of the pyramid are highly polished so as to avoid high frequency absorption. A simpler (and easier) structure can be made from an electric light lampshade, again filled with Keene's Cement or plaster of Paris, with the cement brought out to a point.

A more elaborate treatment would use a flared cone determined in such a way that there should be a continuous expansion of the air channel from the loudspeaker to the external air. In this way a specific acoustic load can be placed on the loudspeaker diaphragm on its upper face to balance (partially) the load placed on the rear by the column itself.

This latter treatment adds very considerably

to the "attack" of the unit. Improvement in transient response, and in all those qualities that depend on a "dead-beat" characteristic in the diaphragm, is very noticeable. I have accordingly set out to improve on this improvement by adding an integmediate "throat" between the column and the disperser, and the success is quite marked.

The throat (g) consists simply of a box with four sides, 12 in. by 12 in. internally, of \(\frac{1}{2} \) in. by 12 in. internally, of \(\frac{1}{2} \) in. by 12 in. internally, of \(\frac{1}{2} \) in. by 12 in. internally, of \(\frac{1}{2} \) in. by 12 in. internally, of \(\frac{1}{2} \) in the bottom made of hardboard with a circular hole cut in it corresponding to the speaker hole in the baffle board. At each corner a \(\frac{1}{2} \) in the baffle board. There is also a curved piece of hardboard glued to the bottom and up each corner to the top of the throat to act as guide to the making of a flare with Keene's Cement. Before the cement has set other \(\frac{1}{2} \) in. pegs are temporarily fixed at the top of each corner of the throat, so that sockets are formed, when the pegs are withdrawn, to register with the dowels on the disperser unit.

In setting, the cement will probably crack, but the cracks can readily be filled up with Alabastine and then the surface can be rubbed down to a smooth finish with sandpaper. When completely dry (and this may take a month or more) the surface should be varnished and left

with a high polish.

When this extra throat unit is used, it is, of course, an advantage to extend the apex of the reflector through the centre of the throat. In this way the throat expansion rate can readily be made to follow any desired law—exponential, tractrix, hyperbolic or catenoidal. For my part, I doubt whether it will make very much difference which curve is used for the short distances involved, so long as there is a gradual transition from a horizontal wave-front from the speaker cone to the vertical wave-fronts round the column. There might, however, be such a difference if the throat and the disperser were not built up solid with cement.



Leak Point-One Stereo Unit

Wharfedale of the latest Column Eight and PST/8 shelf or table models (with expanded polystyrene panels), not forgetting the column model made with concrete blocks, Joan Coulson's excellent programme using E.M.I.'s "Capitol" stereo reproducers, Arnold Sugden's brand new stereo reproducer, in console cabinet, with neat matching omni-directional column loudspeakers and the mono/stereo tape session presented by Acoustical Manufacturing Co. employing two Quad amplifiers and two Quad electrostatic speakers.

Two tape recorder manufacturers adopted the sensible plan of preparing special tapes to demonstrate the quality and features of their respective instruments. The familiar voice of Kenneth Williman, of Simon Sound Service, introduces a range of material, from live piano and violin to choir recordings, made on their versatile mono model Simon SP/4 machine, and examples of what the Reflectograph Stereacorder machines can do are discussed by two people on the Multimussic tape. I believe these demonstration tapes will be available to

dealers later.

Stereo pre-amplifier/control units that impressed me included the Altobass "Stereo Seventy", the Dulci "Stereo Eight" and the just released beautifully constructed Leak "Point One" stereo unit. This last model probably has the most comprehensive facilities of any British stereo design. Its five-position function switch permits the choice of: (1) stereo, (2) stereo reverse, (3) monaural pickup (this converts a stereo PU so that it will play normal LPs, (4) R (monaural connects both channels to right input), (5) L (monaural connects both channels to left input). It has a rumble filter switch with turnover at 70 c/s, balance control, dual ganged bass/treble controls, input selector to accept tape, tuner, microphone, etc. The only omission seems to be a low-pass steep cut filter with cut-off at, say, 5 Kc/s and 10 Kc/s.

Mention must be made of the Altobass "Twin-Two" sterco amplifier designed, as the makers state, "to satisfy the demand for stereo reproduction somewhat better than the average radio quality". This compact system comprises two units (control and main amplifier) connected by five feet of cable. Dual concentric controls are fitted for volume/tone, the latter being a top-cut circuit. Power amplifier consists of two separate 2 watt amplifiers, on one chassis with power pack. Price, complete, only 16 guineas. I heard this equipment and the performance is quite acceptable. At the other end of the price scale, Telefunken displayed their de-luxe Stereo-Radiogram, S8, selling at 960 guineas.

Among the imported audio equipment on show, Technical Suppliers demonstrated the latest Norwegian Tandberg Stereo-Plus portable tape recorder handling four-tracks, or twin-track stereo, on normal \(\frac{1}{2}\) in tape. For \(\ella11\) 17 a stereo recording attachment is now available for the original Stereo-Plus model. TSL have been appointed the distributors in the UK for the Danish Ortofon pickup, their best stereo model (equivalent performance to the mono "C" type) retails at \(\ell22\)4, plus \(\ell29\) 14s. ld. P.T.

NORTHERN AUDIO FAIR

By DONALD W. ALDOUS*

There is an undeniable atmosphere about Audio Fairs. Unlike radio or motor shows, only a few small boys seem to tear round clutching piles of leaflets, while the dedicated addicts jostle elbows with the casually interested in the rooms of hotels in which such shows appear to be presented all over the world. The womenfolk sit on chairs in the lounges or corridors with glazed expressions whilst their male companions try to explain just what stereo is, or what they think stereo is, and what new thrills it can offer them in their homes, if only permission will be given to house two loudspeakers in the living room!

This second Autumn Audio Fair, held at the Grand Hotel, Harrogate, must be adjudged a success by any standards, as it is estimated that 25,000 to 30,000 people passed through the exhibition during three days, with a high attendance of technical and trade visitors. Most of the top personalities among the manufacturer exhibitors were present, including Gilbert Briggs (Wharfedale), Peter Walker (Acoustical), Jim Rogers (Rogers), Arnold Sugden (Connoisseur), Dick Arbib (Multimusic), Guy Fountain (Tannoy), Dick

*In the absence of our Technical Editor, Mr. Percy Wilson, on a visit to the U.S.A. and Canada, Mr. Donald Aldous, Technical Editor, "Gramophone Record Review", has prepared this report on the highlights of the recent Northern Audio Fair.

Whiteley (Whiteley), and the Scharfs (Goldring), although Harold Leak was away in Canada. Donald Chave (Lowther) and Roy Wellington (Sound Sales) did not exhibit; if these had been present, the gathering of the clans would have been complete.

A word of praise for the attractive scarlet, black and grey decor throughout the exhibition, due to Cyril Rex-Hassan, Fair organiser and officer, who, incidentally, made valiant attempts to keep the noise levels down in the demonstration rooms, but open doors are an ever-present problem, particularly when a few errant exhibitors were determined to employ the fairground "barker" technique of more and more noise to entice visitors within, and then to batter them into insensibility with sheer volume. One favourite stereo record for this purpose was the admirable Decca L.S.O. version of the "1812 Overture", which by the way some sensitive people were backing out from rooms where this music was blasting forth, it was more a retreat from stereo, than the retreat from Moscow!

Fortunately, there were other demonstrations that did provide the visitor with an opportunity to hear what stereo sound has to offer. My own favourites for satisfying musical sounds in stereo were Jim Rogers's session using two of his "1284" three-speaker column enclosures. Raymond Cooke's smooth presentation for

Dec



View showing a cut-away section of the G.E.G. "Octagonal Periphonic" cabinet

Under the trade mark "Stereosound" Capital Radio, of Brighouse, introduced a 191 guinea twin 6-watt stereo amplifier, PP5, and their

Philadelphia reproducer, which combines the PP5 amplifier in a novel stereo cabinet, of dimensions 39 in. wide, 16 in. deep and 32 in. high. This allows the two cabinet speakers to be stowed (when not in use) in its ends and sliding doors conceal the amplifier/turntable. This firm's exclusive in-built balancing signal feature ("blips" from a relaxation oscillator) is incorporated.

Of the many other interesting items seen and heard, space will permit only a passing mention of the superb Tannoy Stereo pickup, the new Goldring-Lenco GL.60 turntable and balanced-armature stereo cartridge (demonstrated admirably with Kelly loudspeakers), the latest Celestion G.44/1300 compact stereo speaker system, using two pressure type direct radiators placed about 4 ft. from floor, on each side of the main enclosure housing two 12 in. loud-speakers, and the new G.E.C. "Periphonic Octagonal" enclosure, which can be used with a single metal-cone speaker, but for full peri-phonic action a second unit is operated in pushpull in an internal pipe, thereby reducing second harmonic distortion.

A thought to brood on in closing: a schism has arisen between "hi-fi" and "stereo", at least in the minds of many of the record-buying public, rightly, alas! I agree entirely with the sentiments expressed in a new Philco leaflet on their Stereo-30 reproducer, namely, ". . . do not believe that the discerning buyer will be satisfied with an inexpensive stereo effect as a substitute for the fidelity of a full frequency response monaural system . . . With stereo, certain 'effects' can be achieved which appear more realistic than on a single channel system. But, as in a single channel system, the band width of the frequency range (true high fidelity) must necessarily be confined to the limits of the components. The fidelity cannot be equivalent to that obtainable on a monaural system selling for the same price." (My italics.) Fidelity standards, both in recording and reproduction, must be maintained if stereophony is to become a genuine advance in the search for "perfect" sound reproduction.

I have indeed heard one or two really good American recordings at Montreal. which some American reviews hailed as being excellent stereo, I have found to be intolerable One recording of a violin concerto just sounded as though part of the orchestra had gone off stage from time to time leaving the middle only the soloist remained quite empty; unperturbed.

On the other hand, one or two British recordings which I know to be first class in every respect have received unfavourable reviews over here. Thus, Beecham's Scheherazade was summed up by one reviewer in the following terms: Performance: An absolute knock-out. Recording: Fine, but with no outstanding stereo characteristics. Stereo Directionality: Only fair. Stereo Depth: Not particularly noticeable.

I agree with the first verdict but not with the implications of the others. In a sense, I suppose, there are no outstanding stereo characteristics but that is because the effect is so well integrated. With a well-balanced reproducing system in which crosstalk throughout the scale is low, the true stereo effect is quite apparent: but it is an effect of solidity which is what stereo means) and not one of directional discreetness which is what the reviewer evidently meant.

I stress this distinction because I am sure it is one of fundamental importance. Unless it becomes fully, and internationally, recognised stereo will become degraded. An orchestra is an entity and not an unfortuitous conglomeration of warring factions. I am not so sure about a jazz band. In that case a little gimmicky left and right nonsense is in order, and

can in fact be quite thrilling.

This was well illustrated by the clever showmanship of Mr. Towler of Tannoy (Canada) Ltd. The quality both of stereo and of monaural (or mono as it is coming to be called over here) in his room was an outstanding feature of the show. The Tannoy stereo pickup, by the way, held its own, and I think more than held its own, with the best. It had such a clean, sweet, smooth character, free from over-sibilance and other jangling noises, and its cross-talk was of the lowest order. On one occasion when there were only half-a-dozen people in the room Mr. Towler said to my wife, "Watch me fill the room!". He put on a gimmick record (yes, the room!". it was British), turned up the volume just a little but not so as to be overpowering, and in flocked the crowd. In a few moments he changed to a good orchestral recording and then said, "Watch me empty the room", and went on to play more "difficult" music. Some of the crowd remained but the bulk soon departed. One group of youngsters, however, stayed to ask me how many speakers there were and would hardly believe me until the curtains were drawn back and only two were revealed.

TWO NORTH AMERICAN **AUDIO FAIRS**

By OUR TECHNICAL EDITOR

I have just come from the Montreal "High Fidelity Exposition" which has been sponsored by the Dominion High Fidelity Association of Ontario and Quebec.

It is the most attractive and the most interesting Audio Show I have ever attended Not only is the venue, the Windsor Hotel of Montreal, ideal for the purpose, with its spacious rooms, thick walls, imposing staircase and corridors, but there has been a tacit understanding among the exhibitors that Hi-Fi is a serious business, worthy of something better than gimmicky noises.

Of course, stereo has been the highlight of the show, both from disc and from tape. Fortunately, there is now a good selection of recordings available, and one has not been compelled to listen to the same old gimmicks at each demonstration. In fact I have not heard a single railway train or racing car. Ouite a large proportion of the exhibitors have chosen to play classical music and most of them seem to prefer British records, particularly London/Decca.

They are right, for from what I have heard the American recordings have laid far too much stress on the left/right business and far too little on the proper integration of sound. Microphone placing is no doubt responsible. The American technique has been to have the microphones far apart; the European technique is to have them simulate, in phase and intensity of reception, what our two ears pick up from an ensemble. The difference has been aptly described in the quotation I made from Mr. Cramwinchel's correspondence with me on the article on the Physiology of Stereo last September.

The Americans are apparently only just awakening to the difference. Harold Leak, who has been one of the special British guests at the Show (others were Hector Slade of Garrard and Dick Merrick of Ferrograph) tells me that the New York Fair at the beginning of October was very depressing at the start: it seemed as though stereo was being "sold" to the unworthy type of recording. But things improved as the show went on and some excellent American recordings became available.

British Products

Another feature of the show that impressed itself upon me was the way in which other British products—Leak, Quad and Verdik amplifiers; Celestion, Quad, Wharfedale, Goodmans, Stentorian, Vitavox speakers; Garrard, Collaro and B.S.R. turntables; and Ferrograph and Reflectograph tape recorders were received. My wife and I deliberately went about listening to public comments; it was wearying on the feet but was very revealing. There was undoubtedly a definite preference for British products, but alas, the delivery story was not nearly so heartening. All the agents are sorrowful that they cannot get delivery of enough, in time.

Now it is not that the British products are so very much better than the best American. Some of the best American amplifiers, for instance, are at least equal to, and probably even better

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Provision is made in the upper section of the cabinet for rotating the baffle by the listener to give the best stereo effect.

A single cabinet with loudspeaker may be used for single channel listening.

Corner Cabinet £7 · 10 · 0
Plinth for floor mounting 17/- extra

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The floor area occupied is much smaller than that for two conventional cabinet speakers of similar performance. Columns have 360° diffusion by means of a dome mounted above the loudspeaker. One unit may be used for monaural sound and a second for stereo.



"SENIOR" for 8" unit - - £18.18.0 H.F.816 Unit £6.17.0 "JUNIOR" for 6" unit - - £9.19.6 H.F.610 Unit £2.11.6 or £2.13.6





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S.510 is a 5" unit, with a 10,000 gauss magnet. £2.2.0 (inc. P.T.).

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STEREO* sound is so named because it gives the illusion of three dimension sound and "presence".

Essentially, a stereo record system requires two each of amplifiers, speakers and speaker housings, plus a special pick-up capable of carrying sound from two sound tracks of a stereo record to separate amplifiers and thence to their respective speakers.

With proper placement of speakers in a room, a good stereo system is capable of creating the illusion of actual "presence" of the recording artists, and to take on a lifelike three-dimensional character.

High-fidelity enthusiasts, dealers and service engineers know that the quality of sound reproduction obtainable from any system depends on the quality of each component used therein—and that any given system is only as good as its weakest link

STEREO SOUND VALUES

It would be untrue to say that a quality stereo record player would be little more expensive than an equivalent quality standard monaural (single channel) system. Costs must be increased by doubling the number of amplifiers, speakers and speaker housings or cabinets.

With stereo, certain "effects" can be achieved which appear more realistic than on a single channel system. But, as in a single channel system, the band width of the frequency range (true high-fidelity) must necessarily be confined to the limits of the components. The fidelity cannot be equivalent to that obtainable on a monaural system selling for the same price.

Before the end of 1958, the public will have a wide choice of stereo record reproduction systems from which to choose. We are hopeful that the day will come-and soon-when all manufacturers can give the public packaged high-fidelity stereo systems at the cost of good high-fidelity monaural systems today; we are, however, engineering and quality minded enough to know that when that time comes, monaural high-fidelity systems of equal reproductive quality must, of necessity, be less expensive than the stereo system because they have less duplicated parts. We are pleased about this because it means the public, whatever system it chooses, will have better music for less money-whether it is produced in three dimensional sound or on a monaural system.

We do not believe that the discerning buyer will be satisfied with an inexpensive stereo effect as a substitute for the fidelity of a full frequency response monaural system. We doubt that the great mass of record enthusiasts will be satisfied with the reproduction of their old monaural records when played through a stereo system unless it has been engineered to a standard of quality necessary for faithful reproduction. But we do know that good stereo systems and good monaural systems will be in demand, and the discerning public will, more than ever, insist on the finest possible reproduction for their money.

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Recognising from long experience in the field of sound reproduction the need for building lasting satisfaction into a stereo instrument Phileo engineers have adhered to sound engineering principles in the design of the new Phileo stereo unit. In addition to reproducing the new stereo records with all the three dimensional quality of which they are capable the Phileo stereo system will faithfully reproduce all types of standard and long playing records.

Philco has been one of the world's leading manufacturers of radio and sound reproduction equipment since 1928. High-fidelity, full fidelity, Hi-Fi and stereophonic record players are not new to Philco's Research and Engineering laboratories. Philco has drawn upon its more than 30 years experience in designing this new Philco Stereo 30 to engineering and production standards which have made the name Philco "Famous for Quality the World Over".

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The new Philco Stereo 30 demonstrated for the first time to the public at the Radio Show will be generally available in better dealers' shops. It will take its place, side by side, with Philco's full range of monaural record reproducers.

Quality-wise buyers in the market for stereo will do well to put themselves solidly in the picture with a Philos STEREO 30. For more information and the name of your nearest dealer who can demonstrate the Philos STEREO 30 in your home, write to Department G.I. Philos (Great Britain) Ltd., 30-32 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

* Stereo comes from the Greek word meaning solid.

So lifelike, the recording stars might be your guests!

With a Philco record player you can imagine that the recording stars are your guests, so lifelike, clear and tone-true is their reproduction. Their handsome appearance, and attractive prices, are other features you will appreciate when you see and hear them at your Philco dealer's. Go along soon!



Phonorama VHF/FM Hi-Fi Radiogram has 9 valves, Garrard

4-speed autochanger, 2 forward facing speakers, provision for tape recording and play back. Walnut veneered cabinet. Model 3764 58 gns.

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Possesses all the features and tone controls of our single No. 1 "Symphony" Amplifier but gives 5 + 5 watts at super buality. Has facilities for single monaural and dual monaural from disc, radio and tape together with stereo disc. No additional pre-amps or power required.

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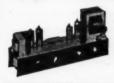
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as reviewed so favourably by Mr. P. Wilson, Technical Editor of "The Gramophone."

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The GOLDRING latest model GLS8 Transcription Unit, fitted with Ronette Stereophonic Monaural pickup cartridge and pickup cartridge and diamond stylus (essential or stereo). Price £29.3.10







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· 3 heads, separate record and replay amplifiers, enabling instant comparison to be made between signal recorded on tape, and the input.

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Provision for conversion to stereo.

· Lever deck controls, providing variable speed wind forward and back from extra fast to inching for editing; sound available for editing if required; instant stop and start.

· Peak level recording meter; Push-button record-playback controls with record safety latch; Clock-type tape position indicator; 3 Garrard motors; 2 matched loudspeakers; Accommodates up to 81" reels.

• 3 watts undistorted output; 2 input and 2 output sockets; plays total of 2 hours 8 minutes on two tracks at 74 I.P.S. or 4 hours 16 minutes at 33 I.P.S.

• Fitted with Bib tape splicer on deck, complete with reel of tape, spare reel, 2 screened jack plugs.

FOR THE TECHNICAL MAN—DIMENSIONS: 21" long x 14½" wide x 10½" high; Weight 50 lbs. FREQUENCY RESPONSE: ±2 dB. 50—10,000 c/s: ±3 dB. 45—12,000 c/s. OVERALL RESPONSE: Strictly to C.C.I.R. recommended specifications. SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO: Better than — 45 dB. (unweighted, including hum). OUTPUT FROM PLAYBACK PREAMPLIFIER: 200 mV. R.M.S. INPUTS TO RECORD AMPLIFIER (High Impedance): Microphone 1 mV.; Radio or pickup 50-200 mV.—for maximum record level, "WOW" AND "FLUTTER": Better than 0.2% R.M.S. As measured on -for maximum record level. the G.B.-Kalee Flutter Meter.

THE TECHNICAL EXPERTS' OPINION OF THE REFLECTOGRAPH

Price

94 gns

P. Wilson, M.A.,
"The Gramophone"

This is without doubt the most versatile domestic tape recorder that I have had the pleasure of trying out, and the quality, both of its recording and its playback, is of exceptionally high standard. For quality of performance, then, I give the instrument full marks: I know of no better. For the construction I have nothing but praise. There is nothing filmsy about it either as a nothing out praise. There is nothing filmsy about it either as a piece of mechanism or on the electronic side. It is a fine piece of engineering up to the highest British standards.

D. W. Aldous, M.Inst.E., M.B.K.S.

Gramophone Record Review"

Model 500

Gramophose Record Review."

The separate record and replay amplifiers make possible the direct monitoring from the tape during the actual recording and this facility is certainly a boon. There is no doubt whatever that when one has used this type of recorder one never wishes to return to the combined record/playback type of instrument. I playback type of instrument. I have never heard better quality at 7½ in.p.s. from any tape recorder that has passed through

my hands. The "Reflectograph" is a pedigree tape recorder of immaculate construction and impeccable performance.

James Moir, "Hi-Fi News"
Separate motors are used for capstan drive and both spools, all three motors being of Garrard manufacture. The overall impression after some months of use is that the machine is convenient and pleasant to handle while the extra facilities make it very suitable for professional use.

Reflectograph Unique Guarantee

One year's free service including valves. Service usually undertaken on your own premises within twenty-four hours notice by factory trained engineers of E.M.I. Company. After the first year-up to twenty years-for a small annual fee a fully comprehensive maintenance contract is available.

To maintain consistent deliveries Reflectographs are at present available from a limited number of retailers, which include those shown below.

If you are not conveniently situated to any of these retailers please write to Multimusic Limited, Hemel Hempstead, Herts., giving the name and address of your usual retailer.

LONDON
W.1 Executive Cameras Ltd.; His Master's Voice
Showrooms; John Lewis & Co. Ltd.; Period
High Fidelity Ltd.; Webb's Radio.
W.2 Thomas Heinitz; Lee Electronics; Sound
Tape Vision Ltd.; Tele-Radio (1943) Ltd.;
Teletape.
W.C.1 Alfred Imhof Ltd.; Larg & Sons (London)
Ltd.

W.C.2 Bishop Sound & Electrical Co. Ltd.; Modern Electrics Ltd. S.W.1 Dickinsons of Pall Mall Ltd.; Harrods Limited; Peter Jones Ltd.

S.W.9 Hensler Bros. Ltd. S.W.16 Francis of Streatham, E.10 Stanwood Radio Ltd. E.12 Saxby's.

N.4 Sypha Sound Sales Ltd. N.13 Janes & Adams Ltd. N.W.5 Starr Audio Limited. ABERDEEN James Scott & Co. ALDERSHOT Tingleys Ltd.

BELFAST Radio 26 . BEXLEYHEATH Broadway Radio. BIRMINGHAM 1 Jewkes & Co. Ltd. BIRMINGHAM 14 Millar Thomson.

BIRMINGHAM 2 Walker Bros. (Electrical Engineers) Ltd.

BOLTON Harker & Howarth. BOURNEMOUTH Tape Recorders (Bournemouth) Ltd.

BRIGHTON John King (Films) Ltd.

BRISTOL 1 Audio-Bristol. BROMLEY Howard Photographic. BURY ST. EDMUNDS Leesons Photographic

CAMBERLEY Morris Bros. of Camberley Ltd. CAMBRIDGE H. W. Peak Ltd.; G. P. Reece. CANTERBURY Gouldens.

CARDIFF City Radio (Cardiff) Ltd.; James Howell & Co. Ltd. CARLISLE Misons. CHANNEL ISLANDS Regent Radio Ltd.

COLESHILL A. H. Peckmore & Co. CROYDON Classical Electrical Co. Ltd. DERBY Victor Buckland Ltd.; Hurst & Wallis Ltd. EDINBURGH A. R. Bolton & Co.

FARNHAM The Record Shop. GLASGOW, C.1 R. Wylie Hill & Co. Ltd. GT. YARMOUTH Norfolk Radio Service Co. Ltd. GUILDFORD Soundcraft. HALIFAX Trevor Fawthrop.
HARROGATE Vallance & Davison Ltd.
HORNCHURCH Domestic Audio Developments.

HORNCHURCH Domestic Audio Developments.
HUDDERSFIELD Lauries (Film Services) Ltd.
ILFORD Ilford Music Shop Ltd.
KIDDERMINSTER F. W. Long.
LEEDS 1 Beckett Film Services Ltd.; Vallance
& Davison Ltd.
LEIGH John Shinn & Sons Ltd.
LIVERPOOL 1 Beaver Radio (L'pool) Ltd.
LUTON Luton Typewriters & Office Supplies
Ltd.

MANCHESTER 3 High Fidelity Developments Ltd.
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE 1 Northern Sound Services Ltd.
NORWICH Tumilty Electric Ltd.

NORWICH Turnity Electric Ltd.
NOTTINGHAM Don Briggs Kinescope Service
Ltd.; C. Gilbert Ltd.
OSWESTRY Power's Radio Ltd.
OXFORD G. Horn & Son; L. Westwood.
PAIGNTON Robert Whitnall & Co. (Paignton) Ltd.
PLYMOUTH H. Jones & Co. (Plymouth) Ltd. POOLE R. P. Barfoot. READING Barnes & Avis Ltd.; Hickie & Hickie

Ltd. RICHMOND Musicraft Hi-Fi Centre. RINGWOOD H. C. Hill.

RINGWOOD H. C. Hill.

ROMFORD A. H. Silcocks & Son Ltd.; T. & B.

Photographic Co.

RUTHERGLEN J. C. Paton Ltd.

SALISBURY J. F. Sutton.

SHEFFIELD 7 D. W. Roberts.

SHEFFIELD 6 E. Spooner & Son.

SOUTHALL Musicraft Hi-Fi Centre.

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THORNTON HEATH Stanley E. Thomas Ltl.
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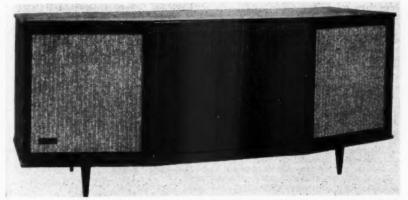
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Tannoy (North America) Lanseer Enclosure for Stereo. Each speaker is 12-inch Dual on 7-cubic ft. infinite baffle

than, the best British in design and lay-out. As I listened to them they seemed to me to be equal in performance, too. And their styling was on the whole definitely more attractive. But their price was relatively higher and, I was told, their reliability not so good. This last is not my verdict. I just don't know. I only pass on what I was told, since it seems to explain how British goods manage to maintain their hold on public preference.

Pick-up Arms

In the matter of pick-up arms, the Americans are well ahead of us. I saw some beautiful examples, though some, alas, were mounted wrongly so as to give a substantial tracking error at the inner grooves of a record. In all, and there were some extremely clever designs, the motion across the record felt so sleek and uniform; the only query I had at the back of my mind was whether its viscous nature would not of itself create undue, if uniform, side pressure. I longed therefore, to bring one home to try out at my leisure; but they are relatively expensive and my dollar allowance, would not run to it; nor would the 44 lb. maximum baggage allowed by B.O.A.C., if it comes to

Speaker Units

There were, to me, some novel and intriguing speaker units. American ingenuity has proliferated itself here. Woofers with huge magnet pots, some with 4 in. diameter coils even; coaxial tweeters with acoustic lenses and all sorts of shapes; and cones and chassis of unusual designs. Enclosures, again, were weird and wonderful, though there seemed to be a tendency towards simplicity. There were also, alas, many small types which were supposed to be adequate for stereo, including portable players with slave loudspeakers of various degrees of ingenuity. These tended to spoil the show for all were woefully inadequate.

Tape Recorders

American tape recorders (and there are many) I found difficult to judge because, frankly, I do not like most of the American tapes that I have heard. Perhaps I have been unfortunate, or perhaps the tape demonstrators are undiscerning. Certainly, I found nothing whatever amiss with the demonstration I had of the Ampex domestic tape reproducer: there indeed was perhaps the most satisfying quality we heard in the show. But the whole instrument was massive and cost over £1,000. Curiously enough, the atmosphere there was much the same as one got in the room which J. B. Smyth had set aside for the demonstration of two Quad Electrostatic speakers (with two

Quad II amplifiers operating in stereo from an Ortofon (E.S.L.) pick-up). It was so restful and unobtrusive. One felt that one could live for ever with that sort of musical effect.

By and large, however, the excerpts one heard from other American recorders had the opposite effect on me. The recordings chosen were fit to waken the dead. So I just can't tell you how the instruments compare with my favourite models at home.

Boston

The degradation of stereo was shown in abundance at the other audio fair I visited. This was held in Boston, Massachusetts, during the second week in October. It thoroughly depressed me with its noise and its vulgarity (musically I mean)

(musically, I mean).
Yet I did find several interesting things there. The first was a new full-range electrostatic speaker by Wright & St. George of Boston. There were several types ranging from small floor models to auditorium models. The one that attracted most attention was in the form of a shallow box, about 4 ft. by 3 ft. by 5 in. deep, which could be hung from a picture rail. In the adverse circumstances in which I heard it, it sounded sweet and smooth, though rather lacking in deep bass. I shall be going back to Boston, however, and have arranged a special audition. So don't take my preliminary comments as definitive.

Another speaker system that intrigued me was the J. B. Lansing (of California). This is a long wooden affair with a large bow front which acts as a reflector for the sound proceeding from the speaker units at each end; 8 to 10 feet in all. There are three units at each end: woofer, squawker and tweeter; the latter point directly outwards and the high notes are therefore not reflected by the bow front. The whole system gave a massive sound. But again, nearby disturbances prevented me from forming any true assessment.

forming any true assessment.

The third item that impressed me, and that very much indeed, was the new Weathers Ceracim stereo cartridge. I actually listened to that in operation at a playing weight of 2 grms, and with the arm pointing upwards, the turntable having been inclined to the horizontal at an angle of 45°. Was there a trick in it such as a hidden spring in the arm? I don't know, but I don't think so. For the cartridge played properly, and was even unaffected when we hit the table with a mallet! The cartridge with diamond stylus, retails at approximately £6 and is obviously very good value.

The fourth thing that interested me during my stay near Boston was the KLH speaker system which I saw in Cambridge, Mass. In this the speaker units are moulded into the front baffle and are then enclosed in an airtight box so as to simulate an infinite baffle. This system was devised and patented by Edgar Villchur of the Acoustic Research Laboratories of Cambridge, Massachusetts some three or four years ago and the KLH is licensed by him. The basis of the design (and of the patent) is, of course, that the stiffness of the air enclosed in the cabinet is the controlling factor and not any stiffness in the unit itself.

Another feature of the KLH which interested me was the make-up of the cone of the 8 in. bass unit. This was a moulded fabric which had been treated with some sort of plastic (asphalte, it looked like) so as to increase the stiffness. I have never handled so stiff a cone material, and I will wager that the break-up of the cone into nodes and anti-nodes will be well up the

Unfortunately, I had no opportunity to hear the speaker, but I hope to have a demonstration on my return to Boston just before I fly back to England at the end of November.

Reflectograph Service

Multimusic Ltd. of Hemel Hempstead, Herts, the makers of the Reflectograph range of tape recorders, have announced a new unconditional guarantee scheme applicable to all their models used in the U.K. This will cover the period whilst a machine forms part of the dealer's stock and then for one year from the date of sale to the dealer's customer.

It is intended that service will be given on the premises concerned within twenty-four hours' notice. No charge for parts, valves or labour will be made unless the service was made necessary by misuse or neglect.

After the first year Multimusic will offer via their dealers a comprehensive maintenance contract for three guineas per machine, per annum. The actual service will be carried out by Home Maintenance Ltd., part of the E.M.I. Group of Companies.

News from the Dealers

"The Record Shop" at 397 Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex, is now open and offers a specialist service for those interested in classical records.

John Trapp Ltd., North London retailers of Hi-Fi equipment and records, staged, on November 6/7th at the Hornsey Town Hall, an ambitious presentation, "Hi-Fi Stereophonic Sound", to which the public were invited. Each performance, lasting three hours, played to a full house and the public were well rewarded by an excellent presentation. The aim of John Trapp to interest the widest public in the strides the gramophone, Hi-Fi and Stereophonic Sound have made over the years was fulfilled. The programme covered the history of the

The programme covered the history of the gramophone from the cylinder machine to stereophonic sound, of which equipment was displayed and demonstrated on a revolving stage, also recordings of an "Imaginary Journey in Sound"—each record accompanied by well conceived stage presentations. The whole was ably compèred.

Correction

Due to an unfortunate error in the Truvox Tape Recorder advertisement (November issue) the descriptive wording relating to the Truvox Stereophonic Head was placed adjacent to the illustration of a Truvox Radio Jack. Similarly the copy relating to the Radio Jack was placed against the illustration of the Truvox Stereophonic Head. It will be seen that this has been corrected in the advertisement on page 52 of this issue.

TECHNICAL REPORTS

G.E.C. Baby Periphonic Loudspeaker. The General Electric Co. Ltd., Magnet House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

Makers' Specification:

Designed to incorporate the periphonic principle, with its bass distortion cancellation, n a small cabinet suitable for the average listening room. Can be built by stages, using one metal cone speaker and presence unit as stage one, adding a second pair and crossover components for full periphonic operation. All parts supplied separately for home assembly. Approximate cost of all parts for the complete speaker as reviewed, £50. Cabinet:

Dimensions: Width, 22 in.; height, 21 in.; depth, 147 in.

Weight: 42 lb. (in carton).

Weight: 42 Ib. (in carton).

Prices: BCS1870 Baby Periphonic Enclosure,
£13; BCS1851 Metal Cone Loudspeaker,
£6 13s. 7d. (plus £2 11s. 5d. P.T.);
BCS1852 Presence Unit, £3 19s. 6d. BCS1857 1.1 mH Bass Filter Choke, £1 18s.; BCS1858 4 mH Treble Filter Choke, 15s. Tax free unless otherwise stated.

The work of the G.E.C. on loudspeakers, under the leadership of F. H. Brittain, has produced many successful and original designs which have been reported in these pages, both in Technical Talk and as equipment reviews. The metal cone loudspeaker, the presence unit, the octagonal cabinet and the periphonic principle, first heard nearly two years ago, have all been stepping stones along the road to good reproduction and it is the aim of the baby periphonic to present the results of this work in as small a compass as possible for the benefit of those whose room space prohibits a large enclosure.

The periphonic system uses two identical 6 in, metal cone units mounted closely together. facing the same way so that the magnet system of one sits inside the cone of the second and connected so that their cones move in opposite directions when excited. Thus distortions produced by flexing of the cone when one is "flaring out" are countered by the other "drawing in". In this way it has been possible to produce the large air movements required at low frequencies without the distortion exceeding 2 or 3%, as against the 10 or 15%

often accepted.

The first periphonic demonstration was given with a large reflex enclosure resembling a sideboard, very solidly and beavily constructed and this is still the only domestic system I have used which will produce frequencies down to less than 30 c/s at large amplitudes and with low distortion. However its very size makes it domestically unacceptable in many homes. The baby periphonic will not offend on this score.

The cabinet is very solidly constructed of in. ply finished in walnut veneer with black grand panel. The grille is a plastic weave in cream and brown. One metal cone unit is mounted centrally behind the sloping grille and the other below the floor between the legs and facing upward. On either side of the former unit is a presence unit. These are small moving coil pressure type units of 2 in. diameter. They are fed via a crossover network centred on 1,500 c/s, the components of which, together with impedance matching transformers and balancing resistors are contained in the cabinet.

A small quantity of damping material is disposed over the inner surfaces of the cabinet which is closed by a solid back. Briefly then the system consists of a very solid closed box of 1.35 cubic feet with the two metal cone units mounted on adjacent sides.

On test the low distortion at low frequencies was clearly apparent and the freedom from oloration very obvious in comparison with other units of similar dimensions. The bass falls away slowly below 100 c/s but is still well in evidence as low as 40 c/s. There is no audible frequency doubling and a remarkable absence of resonances. Higher up some slight muddling was noticed at middle frequencies and the response of the presence units begins to fall gradually away above about 13 Kc/s. Many comparisons were made with the original octagonal cabinet version with metal cone and presence unit fed via a coupling condenser as opposed to a crossover. On the whole the latter was just ahead in my opinion, although, of course, it is a reflex enclosure of twice the size. The extreme bass was better maintained, although un-doubtedly coloration was greater, but the middle frequencies were more clearly produced and the extreme high frequencies were supported by the metal cone above the point where the presence unit alone drops away, although the metal cone unit has a tendency to "ring" up

Undoubtedly the lusty baby periphonic is a considerable advance in high quality speakers of small dimensions and no one hearing (without seeing) would guess, or readily believe, that such sound could come from a small

The sensitivity is lower than most, so around 12 watts is required in an average room. The sensitivity in fact is the same as the full range electrostatic and this makes, of course, a most interesting comparison. The respective designers have both had the same aim—wide range and low distortion, one has adopted a completely new principle, the other has used existing techniques and progressively removed the weaknesses, by the metal cone to avoid break-up and the periphonic principle to cancel distor-tions that remain. The similarity in reproduced sound is very great and shows that neither is far from the truth. Which would I choose? The answer comes from the Beggar's Opera.

'How happy could I be with either Were t'other dear charmer away But while they both tease me together To neither a word will I say".

G.E.H.

A CHRISTMAS GIFT? SEE PAGE 297

Orthotone Stereo Integrated Amplifier, Type STD/444. Price £27 6s. Scientific and Technical Developments Ltd., Mel-bourne Road, Wallington, Surrey. Makers' Specification:

Inputs: A selection switch provides the following facilities. Stereo: Gram. and Radio. Monaural: Gram., Radio 1, Radio 2, Auxiliary.

Outputs: 2.5 watts per channel for less than 0.3% distortion. Facility for paralleling the outputs to give 5 watts (8 watts peak).

Frequency Response: ± 1 db. - 20 cycles-20 kc/s per second.

Sensitivity: 200 mV at each input for rated output.

Feedback: 24 db.

Tone Controls: Treble +5 to -10 db.

Bass +10 to -5 db.

Balance Control: ± 3 db each channel.

Finish: "Champagne Gilt" enamel with engraved solid metal control knobs. Mounting: Free standing or through cut out

Dimensions: 114 in. wide by 44 in. high by 12 in. deep, overall, including plugs.



"This amplifier brings stereo into a moderate price bracket for those who demand equipment with high engineering standards combined with elegant styling, but whose loudspeaker power requirements are comparatively modest." So reads the makers' leaflet, and as we shall see, it sums up the STD/444 very well.

S.T.D. have chosen a style for their panels and control knobs which originated with the Acoustical Quad amplifiers eight years ago. The idea of using solid machined metal knobs, suitably engraved and partially sunk in a stepped front panel is a good one, both from the point of view of appearance and ease of use. It is surprising that only now are other examples coming to light, both here and overseas. pleasant but substantial appearance given to the front carries on through the entire construction of the 444. Internally there are three chassis sections formed into a "U" shape with the panel bridging the top of the "U". One side chassis holds the power supply components, the rear and other side chassis contain two identical amplifiers consisting of an ECC83 double triode valve and an EL84 output pentode. A perforated metal cover fits neatly over all and has four plastic feet. All plugs are fixed to the rear chassis and appear through an opening in the cover. The only exception is the voltage adjustment which is on the underside. This form of construction has certain advantages: strength, freedom from unwanted electrical coupling. good weight distribution and excellent ventilation are among them. Access is good except for a small area behind the plugs, etc., at the rear. Components, construction, assembly and wiring are all excellent and the performance should not be marred by premature failure in these departments.

On the panel are two large control knobs. That on the left is the input selector (stereo and mono), that on the right is the volume control: between them are the continuously variable bass and treble controls, one above the other. (The last three controls are ganged and operate simultaneously on both channels.) Outboard of the selector and volume knobs are two small ones, an on/off switch and stereo balance. Above KL85K 6 watt KL85T Hi-Fi o

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ACCLAIMED AT THE NORTHERN AUDIO FAIR!

se two new Telefunken models are unique. Model KL85K with its individual certificate guarantees the remarkable frequency range of 38-20,000 c.p.s. and the KL75K that for 50gns. gives two-speed HI-FI that is as yet unchallenged—If you missed the Audio Fair you should get the fully illustrated colour brochures that give full technical detailssend for them today.

The Telefunken KL85K has a frequency range of 30-20,000 c.p.s. at 71 i.p.s. 3dB and 30-15,000 c.p.s. at 31 i.p.s. The certificate issued with each model guarantees this unprecedented range. D.C. heated pre-amplifier valves cut out all hum and background noise while the two matched oval speakers have separate input controls for mike, radio and gram. Five push buttons give instant control including quick-stop and trick button for superimposition. Over 4 hours play using Telefunken DP Tape at 31 i.p.s. on 7 inch reels. The machine can be used as straight-through amplifier. Magic eye-level control and incorporates special tape-splicing groove.

TELEFUNKEN Model KL85K 75gns.

KL85KL specification as KL85K but with 6 watt push-pull output stage 79gas*

L85T Table Model for direct use with Hi-Fi equipment or radiogram 63gns4

KL65 specification as KL75K but with compartments for mike, tapes and accessories 57gns* tapes and 57gns*

KL75T Table model for direct use with Hi-Fi equipment and radiogram 45gns*

* All prices excluding microphone-extra from 5gns

The Telefunken KL75K has two speeds with frequency response from 60-16,000 at 31 i.p.s. and 60-10,000 at 11 i.p.s. giving over 4 hours playing time on one Tele-funken DP Tape. Weighing about 20lbs and built into a lightweight Styrol case this remarkable model has push button controls and finely adjusted magnetic heads specially aligned to give maximum fidelity at low speeds. The modulator control for Radio and Mike are combined in one control with facilities for remote control allowing for use as a dictating machine.

TELEFUNKEN Model KL75K 50gns*

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"STEREO EIGHT" Pre-amplifier

circuit construction. Suitable for all types of pickups, tuners, tape (direct from heads), recorders (special facilities for stereo conversion) and microphones. Compensated for alow and fast tape speeds, independent wide range tone controls, steep cut filter, function selector for stereo, dual and individual channels. Full range balance control. Outlets for recording Stereo. Price £23.2.0

Model "STEREO TWO" Pre-amplifier

A high grade Stereo/Monaural instrument for use with Crystal pickups, tuners and compensated tape. Independent wide range tone controls. Full range balance control. 2 twin triodes, printed circuit construction, outlets for recording Stereo.



Price £9.9.0

Both Pre-amplifiers are designed to work with either of the Power Amplifiers below.



Model SP44 Twin (Stereo) Power Amplifier

8 watts (4 watt per channel). Ideal for the home, superb performance, adjusta speaker matching. Price £12.12.0



Model DPA10/2

Matched pair of 10-15 watt (each) ultralinear power amplifiers. For domestic or professional use where only the best reproduction is good enough.

Price £25.4.0 (£12.12.0)

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Hi-Fi Reflex Enclosures

The 'Empress'
Dimensions: 33" high, 21" max. depth,
31" max. width, 26" across baffle front.
Incorporating the new Golden Twelve,
Golden Eight and 4" tweeter, together
with suitable crossover network.

The 'Duchess' (illustrated)
Dimensions' 30" high, 17" max. depth,
25" max. width, 21" across baffle front.
Recommended for use with Golden Ten,
4" tweeter and suitable crossover network.

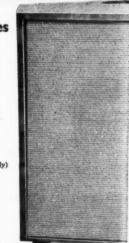
The 'Princess'
Dimensions: 28" high, 12" max. depth, 20" max. width, 17" across baffle front. Recommended for use with Golden Eight of 12.000 lines with wide range response.

or 12.000 lines with wide range response.

PRICFS: 'Princess' 11 gms. (enclosure only)
Golden Eight speaker recommended
for use with 'Princess', £3 9s. 4d.
including P.T.
'Duchess' 15 gms. (enclosure only)
Golden Ten speaker assembly recommended for 'Duchess', £11 11s. 0d.
including P.T.
'Empress' 36 gms. (complete, as
specification)

Write for leaflets which give full details and

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HIGH-FIDELITY STEREOPHONIC SOUND EQUIPMENT, IN KIT FORM

With this latest Heathkit "Do-It-Yourself" equipment you, too, can now enjoy the thrill and realism of Stereophonic sound of the highest quality from suitable Records, Tape or Radio,

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by Astronic

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NOW 24 gm.

SHFIS New Stereo Amplifler, comprehensive facilities, for crystal or magnetic pick-ups. 32 gms.

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An outstanding variable reluctance cartridge giving excellent quality. Simple to instal in any standard arm. Contained in Mumetal shield to minimise hum. High output. Diamond point, .0007". £19. 17. 6.

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THE FIRST MOVING COIL STEREO PICKUP AVAILABLE IN GREAT BRITAIN. Ortofon pickups have always been regarded as top of the tree products. This model no exception. Tracks at 3 grams. Separation 25 db. 3007" diamond point, complete with arm. £47. Ss. 3d. Transformers £2. 5s. 8d. each.

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Our showroom is open for demonstration daily, 9.30-6. 1.30-9. Closed Monday. Friday, Only 16 minutes from Charing Cross by Northern Underground (st Bus 27, 134, 137) to Tufnell Park Station, thence 4 minutes' walk.

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the latter is a small round name-plate which is illuminated in use.

The unit is designed for use with stereo cartridges of the crystal variety which are arranged to self-compensate for modern recording characteristics when presented (as in this equipment) with the correct load. There is accordingly no variety of compensations available and if older pre-standard records are played, some adjustment of the tone controls is necessary for an acceptable balance. As the measurements set out below indicate, a small reduction of the treble control and a slight increase in bass, away from the level position, was needed to produce a level response, but the range of these controls is not great enough for any user however unskilled to produce a grossly unbalanced result.

Arrangements are made to feed both amplifiers to a single loudspeaker—useful for those who intend to add a second speaker and "go stereo" at a later date.

The attractive appearance alone will lead many to investigate the capabilities of the 444 and I have no doubt that it will provide a satisfactory and lasting source of musical enjoyment to them. Here are the test results.

Frequency response (Radio input, tone controls at level).

Amp. A	-3.5 -3	-2 -1.6	-1.7 -1	-1.5 -0.9	-1.3 -0.9	-1 -0.9
Frequency c/s Amp. A Amp. B	1k 0 0	2k +1.8 +1.6	4k +3.7 +3	6k +4.8 +3.2	8k +6.3 +3.3	10k +7 +3.3
Frequency c/s Amp. A Amp. B	12k +7 +3	14k +5 +2.4	16k +2 +1.2	18k 0 0	20k -3 -1.8	

Power frequency response. Both channels delivered more than 2.5 watts between 20 c/s and 15 Kc/s.

Controls. The range of the bass control was +10 to -4 db at 50 c/s, that of the treble -15 to +7 db at 10 Kc/s. The balance control was as specified. The error between the two channels with the control central was 2 db.

Crosstalk. Better than 36 db.

Hum level. 50 db below 1 watt from Amp. A, but only 38 db below 1 watt from Amp. B.

Stability. Both channels could be made to oscillate with 0.25 mfd in parallel with 15 ohms across the speaker terminals, Amp. B was the more easily provoked. Neither would give trouble with conventional loudspeakers. Examination of a square wave showed good transient response with little overshoot or ringing until considerable capacity was added G.E.H.

P.S. Since writing the above we have been advised that the makers have traced and cured the hum in Amp. B.

Telefunken KL85K and T tape recorders.
Price: KL85K, 75 gns. KL85T, 63 gns.
Welmec Corporation Ltd., 147 Strand,
London, W.C.2. Made in Germany.

Makers' specification:

Speeds: 71 and 31 inches per second. 7-in.

Frequency response: 30-20,000 c/s. at 71 i.p.s.

30-15,000 c/s. at 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ i.p.s. Inputs: 2 mv at 2 M Ω (microphone); 2 mv at 100 k Ω (radio); 150 mv at 1 M Ω (gram.).

(gram.).

Outputs: 2 volts at 25 kΩ for amplifier;
5 volts for headphones; 3 watts at 4½ ohms to two elliptical loudspeakers.

Automatic stop at end of tape (from metal

Erase cut out and pause buttons.
Magic Eye level indicator.

Power supply: 110, 127, 150, 220, 240 volt, 55 watts, 50 cycles (60 cycle model available).

Size: KL85K 8 in. high by 18 in. wide by 16 in. deep. KL85T, 7½ in. high by 16 in. wide by 11½ in. deep.

The feature of this instrument which will make the reader stop and think as he peruses the specification is the most remarkable frequency range on both tape speeds. To the doubters, and they will be many, let me begin this report with the statement that the specification is correct.

Two models are at present available: the KL85T is a tape deck plus the necessary electronics to enable it to be used with any modern amplifier and is mounted in a neat moulded plinth of chipwood, veneered and finished to a high gloss: KL85K is a complete tape recorder with two loudspeakers and a 3-watt output stage. The measurements, etc., in this report were made on the KL85T and the additional items contained in the KL85K (which was also tested) will be mentioned later.

At the left front on the deck are three press keys: record, stop, playback. Centre front is a slide knob moving from side to side for fast wind. The stop key returns this to the central position. It was found possible to inch the tape with this control and there seemed to be no reason why this should not be done although my translation of the German instruction sheet (English version awaited) did not suggest it. Either side of the spooling control are two press buttons which can be latched down. That on the left is an interlock and must be depressed before the record key is used (this prevents accidental erasure). If it is latched the erase power is reduced, allowing a second recording to be superimposed on one existing. The remaining button is a pause control which removes tape from heads and idler wheel from drive shaft, giving an interruption in recording or playback completely free from clicks or disturbance.

On the right is a magic eye recording level indicator arranged to operate instantaneously and drop back very slowly (about 1 second). This was very easy to use. Adjacent is a switch to select the input source and coaxial with it the recording level control, scaled 0 to 10, and the power supply switch.

The tape channel is straight and easy to load, both front and rear moulded covers pull out for inspection and cleaning. The former is grooved at exactly tape width to assist splicing, but use jointing tape, not cement, which would attack the plastic. A three-digit tape position indicator is driven from the take-up reel. At the rear is the speed selection lever. A cut out in the rear wall of the plinth reveals a protective panel for fuses and voltage adjustment, sockets for microphone, radio, and pickup input, outlets to amplifier and phones. A 2-core power lead 6 feet long, terminates in a Continental 5-amp. plug: don't be tempted to use it, the pins are thinner than ours and it inevitably ceases to make contact at a crucial moment!

The moulded deck cover is retained by four large screws and by the push-fit control knobs and fast-wind knob. With these out of the way one is immediately fascinated by the mechanical goings on: buttons and keys are pressed, various sequences of operation are studied and fascination changes to admiration at the mechanical ingenuity, the beautiful construction and the smoothness of operation, the ease of adjustment where needed, and the general competence which has made Telefunken one of Germany's great companies,

A single 4-pole motor which runs in almost complete silence, and is little larger than the average gramophone motor, drives two pulleys via a belt: each pulley shaft carries a secondary pulley of differing diameter. A second belt round the capstan flywheel and an idler on the speed change lever (which has a toggle action) is brought into contact with the desired secondary pulley. Take up and fast wind are arranged via other belts and idler wheels and tape tension and braking by shoes bearing on the large diameter spool drums. All wheels, pulleys, etc., are made to fine limits and move effortlessly. A small fan draws air through a port in the case, past the motor and out round the edges of the deck. In a quiet room the hiss of the fan overrides the mechanical noise of the moving parts, so sweetly do they run.

Four screws remove to withdraw the machine from the cabinet, loosen three more and the screen cover removes from the underside. Layout is neat and accessible, components of high standard. A further screen surrounds the motor, the mains transformer is a double wound hum cancelling type. Valve heaters are D.C. fed where necessary to reduce hum. The oscillator is push-pull with a potted ferrite inductor feeding a tiny but very efficient erase head, all helping to minimise background noise. The record/playback head, which has the largest share in the phenomenal frequency range is double screened. The tape is set in motion by the action of a solenoid which brings the pinch wheel up against the capstan shaft, at the same time moving the tape guides forward and completely enclosing the head in a Mumetal screen, leaving just the narrowest of gaps through which the tape can pass. No pressure pads are used.

On the whole I think this is one of the cleverest and most expertly made machines I have seen and its looks certainly belie its price.

Here are the measurements I made. First the response from the standard test tape.

(The low figure at 40 c/s which shows in all measurements was found to be unimportant as at frequencies a few cycles either side response reverted to normal.)

Second, the record and playback (radio input) at 31 i.p.s.

c/s db c/s db	30 -2 4k -1	40 -2 6k -1	60 -1 8k -1	110 0 10k -1	200 0 12k -1	500 0 14k -9	161 161	0
Thir	d, the	rece	-	nd pl	aybacl	-		
c/s		20	40	60	110)	200	500

c/s	20	40	60	110	200	500
db	+0.5	-3	+2	+1	+1	+0·5
c/s	1k	2k	4k	6k	8k	10k
db	0	0	0	-0·5	-1	-1
c/s	12k	14k	16k	18k	20k	21k
db	-1	-1	-0·5	-1·5	-3·5	-8·5

These results are better than any of which I, or other experts to whom I have shown them, have knowledge, and are indicative of the continuing progress which is taking place in the tape field. There is always a risk that extensions of the frequency range are achieved

at the expense of poor signal to noise ratio or considerable distortion at the higher frequencies. Measurements do not always indicate just how pleasant or otherwise the final sound will be. Choosing good broadcasts on V.H.F. from Wrotham and in association with equipment of the highest quality, I can say that it is possible at the higher speed to produce recordings barely distinguishable from the original: a faint, even hiss in quiet passages is almost the only clue. At the slower speed it would take a fairly expert listener to point the flaws, for wow is not detectable and there is an overall smoothness that makes for easy listening.

The KL85K has an additional shallow panel in front of the deck with bass and treble controls, a monitor and playback volume control and speaker cut-out switch. Below this panel is a 3-watt_audio amplifier and two small loudspeakers. Extension speaker sockets appear on the rear panel. The case is of light, but strong moulded wood covered with plastic in green and grev.

The range of the bass control was + 10 to -20 db at 110 c/s and of the treble +2 to -22at 8 k/c. Quality from the internal speakers was acceptable, but very much below the capabilities of the remainder.

There are very few tape machines available as add-on units to an existing high fidelity system and with few exceptions those that exist are of low standard. I have therefore gone into this aspect in detail because I know that many want just such a machine. Here is one that I can put forward without reservation. G.E.H.

Spectone Tape Recorder Model 151B. Price 76 gns., including microphone. Specto Ltd., Vale Road, Windsor, Berks.

Makers' Specification . Mains Supply: 210-250 v.; 50 c/s A.C. Power consumption: 140 watts.

Speeds: 15 i.p.s., 7½ i.p.s., 3½ i.p.s. Spool size: Up to 7 in. diameter.

Frequency response: 15 i.p.s. ± 3 db, 30 c/s-16 Kc/s (to CCIR) 7 ½ i.p.s. ± 3 db, 30 c/s-12 Kc/s (to CCIR) 3 ½ i.p.s. ± 3 db, 40 c/s- 6 Kc/s Hum and noise (unweighted):

Better than 45 db below peak recording level. Wow and flutter: Better than 0.15%.

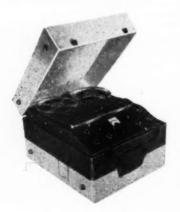
Distortion: 2% total harmonic distortion at

peak recording level. Bias and cross frequency: Approx. 60 kc/s. Inputs:

Mic Low-Low impedance microphone (moving coil)

Mic High-High impedance microphone (crystal)

Line (Radio, etc.) 0.25 megohm.



Outputs:

Extension speaker, 15 ohms, 3 watts. Line: Low impedance unbalanced from cathode follower, 1 volt output from peak recorded tape.

Sensitivity for peak recording level:
Mic "Low" '02 m/volt.
Mic "High" 1-0 m/volt. Line 80 m/volt. 2xEF86; 2xECC40; 2xEL84;

EF91; GZ30. Speaker: 6 in., 15 ohm P.M. Independent push-button

Record/Replay/Fast. One set each for upper and lower tracks. Fast wind in either direction: Bass cut: Continuously either direction: Bass cut: Continuously variable from 0 to -10 db at 50 c/s for microphone recording. Monitor on/off: For setting recording level before actually recording. Record gain: Volume: Speaker on/off. Tone: Variable over the treble frequencies on the replay amplifier only. Does not affect the low-imprediance output. Does not affect the low-impedance output.

Dimensions (Lid closed): 18½ in. by 16 in. by 11½ in.

Weight: 50 lb. This recorder uses the well-known Collaro tape transcriptor with three speeds, two directionrecording and replay, and a digit counter. On a sloping panel are the controls for the record and replay amplifiers together with a recording level meter. The pre-monitor on-off switch enables the recording level to be set correctly before starting the tape, and two panel lights are used as "last track used" indicators. There is also a "bass cut" control for use when voice recordings are being made in close proximity to the microphone.

The figures obtained on test were as follows: Playback amplifier-TBT1 test tape, speed 74 i.p.s.:

c/s Upper Lower		40 -6 -4	60 +1 +2	-		200 +·5 +1·5	50 0 +1 +1
c/s Upper Lower	Track Track	1k 0 0	2k 0 0	4k +·5 -1·5		8k +3·5	10k +5 +1
Rec 31 i.p.	ord re	play	freque	ency	respor	ise,	Speed
c/s db	40	60 -1	110	to	2k +·5	4k +2	6k 5
Spe	ed 71 i.	p.s. :					
c/s db	40 -7	60	to		6k 8	k 10k	
Spe	ed 15 i.	p.s. :					
c/s db	40 +1	60	to	10k +1	12k +1·5	14k +2	16k +2

Construction of the amplifier is extremely good, in fact it is obvious on inspection that the makers have gone to a great deal of trouble to manufacture an instrument that will stand up to hard wear with the minimum amount of trouble. If service should be required, however, all component parts are easily accessible and ample room has been provided around valves and other heat-generating components to provide adequate ventilation. The instruction book supplied is particularly comprehensive and helpful, and we feel that the makers have provided a rugged and versatile instrument at a moderate price.

RUSSIA RECORDS

One's first impression when record-buying in the Soviet Union is how delightfully simple a business it is, for an LP record costs a Russian less than a quarter of the British price, and alternative versions are comparatively rare; he is therefore unaffected by the two major concerns which cause us to give the matter such earnest which cause us to give the matter such earnest consideration. True, the Russian product is in every way inferior to what we are accustomed to—no sleeve (only the old-fashioned 78 cover), therefore no analytical note or polythene bag (they use cellophane), poor surfaces and generally very constricted and boxy recordings -but then, the Russian does not regard a record as a luxury item, as we do, and consequently does not believe that such details of record production are indispensable. Again, most of the playing equipment is extremely simple and unsuited to top-quality recording; "Hi-Fi" (and certainly stereo) mean very little to the vast majority of Russian discophiles and probably would have very little attraction for them even if they did. To put it in another way, for them a record is not a commercial product aiming at giving the highest satisfaction in every respect and at enhancing its manufacturer's reputation, but is purely and simply an adequate and, above all, cheap means of becoming familiar with the music and the performances. It should be stressed, however, that this reluct-ance to spend the last ha'porth of tar on the finished article does not extend as far as the recording of the performance on tape, which is usually of a very high order and the result of long and careful preparation.

To choose a record, then, is simplicity itself-

no need for Record Guides listing best and cheapest versions-but as if to offset this, one soon finds that to go into a shop and buy it is usually an exhausting and frustrating affair. To begin with, the five million inhabitants of Moscow have only seven record shops to buy

from and as these are no larger than the average London equivalent, they are invariably overcrowded and the assistants not unnaturally harassed and unable to give one full attention. Printed catalogues are never in evidence, although after persistent badgering, I found that they did exist and on being given one to examine, was soon surrounded by a crowd of inquisitive shoppers to whom the sight of a catalogue was clearly a revelation. The stock of records available—and this is usually only about two-thirds of the catalogue—is shown either in a card index or on typed lists which are mounted on stiff card and lie strewn over the counter or are posted up on the wall, and it is to these that the assistants refer, if necessary. The records are filed casually and are often found for one by a process of trial and error. As in other Con-tinental countries, it is the name of the work and composer, rather than the record number, which is required, and as a result, one often has the impression (one that proved true on two occasions) that the record required is said to be out of stock merely because the assistant in question does not happen to assistant in question does not nappen to remember that particular title, and that another assistant might probably produce it. Equip-ment for testing the records does exist in most shops, but as it is invariably operated by the already overworked assistants, it is not encouraged and the record is liable to be damaged in the process.

To turn to the works represented on record in the U.S.S.R., the current catalogue shows in the U.S.S.K., the current catalogue shows that there are three records of Russian music for every two of "foreign" music, and much the same proportion applies to classical and Soviet Russian music. Not surprisingly, Tchaikovsky tops the list, leaving Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov and Verdi (!) a safe distance behind. It is comforting to find that even in a State gramophone company intent on illustrating the wealth

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and glories of their musical heritage, there are and glories of their musical heritage, there are the inevitable inexplicable gaps which are never absent from any record catalogue: Balakirev's First Symphony, Rimsky-Korsakov's Ivan the Terrible (one of the most frequently performed of all Russian operas), the Borodin String Quartets, and Prokofiev's first six symphonies. English music is represented by a somewhat motley assortment: Elgar's Cockaigne Overture, Bliss's Checkmate Suite and A minor Piano Sonata, Parkey's Men Mell for two prianes and Thomas. Bax's Moy Mell for two pianos, and Thomas Dunhill's Suite for oboe and piano, all of which, Dunhill's Suite for oboe and piano, all of which, except the Sonata, were recorded by the group of British musicians headed by Sir Arthur Bliss, which toured Russia in 1956. A notable addition to this list is being made this month in the form of Britten's Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra and as Western artists are hardly represented at all in their catalogue, Boris Christoff's forthcoming Moussorgsky and Borodin recital is sure to be received enthusistically. There is also a gradual release in attically. There is also a gradual release in Russia of the Supraphon catalogue, as well as several East German records, which are sold at the normal Russian prices, but are generally a little superior as regards presentation.

Tape-recorders are not uncommon in the

Soviet Union, but clearly offer no competition whatsoever to the gramophone industry, since equipment and tape prices are much the same as those in Britain. To the keen musician, however, a tape-recorder should be a sine qua non, since only on the wireless is he likely to

mm, since only on the wireless is he likely to hear Petrouchka or a Callas performance.

One should not go away with the impression that the Russian record is vastly inferior to our own. As I have already indicated, it is mainly in the matter of tape to disc transfer and pressing that they fall well short of our standards.

DAVID LLOYD-JONES.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor does not necessarily agree with any sieus expressed in letters printed. Address: The Editor, The Gramophone, The Glade, Green Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex.

Vocal Recording

Mr. John Freestone, in your November issue, is quite right about the edginess of vocal recordings. On many occasions I tried to get rid of it, but in vain.

I hope the recording companies will do some further experiments to free us from this nerveracking noise.

Bennekom, Holland. C. J. BRIEJER.

I can echo Mr. John Freestone's dissatisfaction with vocal recordings, not so much at the overemphasised sibilants, which certainly do amount to distortion, but, in my case, the apparently impossible search for medium-priced

apparently impossible search for medium-priced hi-fi equipment which will reproduce the soprano voice free from that appalling "zizz", or comb-and-paper effect as I call it, on practically every other note above a certain frequency, while still retaining its hi-fi virtues. Having tried a succession of pickups, I refuse to go higher than my present one at £14, as with the balance of my equipment of a comparable quality I consider it should at least give me reproduction free from such obvious distortion. Pursuing this theme I went from stand to stand at the recent Radio Exhibition listening to the Kirsten Flagstad track on the listening to the Kirsten Flagstad track on the stereo demonstration record—on only one was it free of that "zizz", and even there some uneasy moments occurred at the climax.

I have received dealers' suggestions that my records are worn or badly recorded, that my treble unit is emphasising this; and solutions

which amount in the end merely to top-cutting. I have heard all about end-of-side distortion and side-pressure, etc., until I wonder why on earth the advent of LP did not take place entirely on tape with its comparatively simple problems.

However, do any of your readers who are also opera-lovers own medium-priced equipment which satisfies them on the points I have mentioned and, if so, where does the secret lie? For the record, my discs were all new, and I cannot believe that 90 per cent of operatic records are "badly recorded".

London, S.W.16. C. T. WILLIAMS.

We heartily endorse Mr. Freestone's remarks in his letter published in the November issue. We have the same trouble with our own vocal recordings and have been told by experts in hi-fi that we also are too particular.

hi-fi that we also are too particular.

As the standard of singing has so greatly deteriorated, the recording engineers of today are no doubt concentrating all their efforts on achieving an all-round hi-fi recording and paying less attention to the voice. Can one blame them? In earlier electrical recordings (especially German Polydor) the standard of vocal recording was far superior. The recent vocal records that give us any satisfaction are

usually re-recordings of pre-war vintage.

Nottingham. M. and A. Basrow. Nottingham.

Musical Comedy

Cheers for Andy Cole, Rita Williams, Tony Osborne, and all those who have made the splendid recordings of White Horse Inn and Rose Marie possible.

How nice to hear these shows sung as they used to be when first produced. May we have many more to follow, including the lovely music of Kalman's Cipsy Princess and Léhar's Land of Smiles, of which we can only get the German recordings.

Whitespiele Kant Hanne Allegaria

Whitstable, Kent. HAROLD A. WILMAN.

Great Interpretations

What a lot of worldly opinions have been voiced in these Correspondence columns recently on the interpretations of some of the greatest conductors of our time. It seems to have become the fashion for record enthusiasts to know better than experienced musicians and to distribute the contraction with a transfer. dismiss this or that interpretation with a wave of the hand.

I wonder how many record enthusiasts have seriously considered the amount of study which is devoted to a single work before its perform-GRAMOPHONE, October 1951), Walter Legge observed that Lipatti insisted on a further five work on Beethoven's Fifth Concerto years' work on Beethoven's Fifth Concerto before he would be prepared to record it. How many of us have said grandly, "Oh, we knew the Emperor concerto backwards"? And in last month's issue, we had Mr. Thurston Dart's illuminating letter on the instrumentation of the first Brandenburg concerto, which further illustrates the great amount of study put into even a standard and well-known work.

Therefore is it not grossly presumptuous to set ourselves up in judgment upon artists who may have possessed an intimate understanding of the music for upwards of fifty years? After all who are we to say that a piece of music should not be played in a particular way, when such artists have devoted much of their lives to studying so many aspects of the music which they offer for our consumption.

It is clearly impossible to be categoric on matters of interpretation; there can only be opinions, and opinions always differ. Let us be grateful that musicians take so much trouble over their work, and in so doing, create these variations which so enrich our music.

Gravesend, Kent. JIMMY KNAPPE.

It is surprising that when so much has been said in your columns about the relative merits of various singers, conductors and instru-mentalists, that so little which transcends the

limitations of personal prejudice has emerged. That so many thoughtful and sensitive people could produce so many wholly divergent, but equally valid, opinions, surely means that no final decision on the relative musical stature of various artists can ever be reached. Basically the whole matter revolves around two problems; the first, and by far the most important, is the interplay of personality between the artist and the listener, and the second is the suitability of the temperament of an artist to interpret the writings of a particular composer. It is the first of these problems which seems to lead to the of these problems which seems to lead to the confusion which reigns when one tries to discuss one's favourite tenor, violinist, or any other musician with someone whose favourite tenor or violinist happens to be different. Just as in the teaching world, one teacher can teach a particular child without any difficulty, whereas another teacher, with a different personality would meet with nothing but trouble and opposition, so in the musical world the opera lover tries to find a vacalist who sings just as he lover tries to find a vocalist who sings just as he would were he gifted with sufficient technical would were he gifted with sufficient technical ability, and that singer is, for him, indisputably greater than any other. Yet that does not in any way invalidate the opinions of another opera lover, although they may be entirely different. Once this is appreciated, all those interminable Björling/Stefano, Schwarzkopf/Callas, Toscanini/Klemperer arguments, in which your readers delight to indulge, become arrant nonsense, and a far greater appreciation which your readers delight to indulge, become arrant nonsense, and a far greater appreciation of real artistic merit becomes possible, and that must surely be the aim of every true music-lover. The second question which I raised earlier is, I believe, universally accepted, and I only included it for the sake of completeness.

London, N.12.

I. R. A. PINNELLS.

Northern Audio Fair

A week ago I visited the Northern Audio Fair. It was a fascinating show, and many fine exhibits were demonstrated in such a way as to show off all their good qualities. Unfortunately some other products, including some of very high repute, failed entirely to do themselves justice because their demonstrators did not let

The commonest fault was over-emphasis of the extreme treble, so excruciating in two cases as to drive me headlong from the room. A subtler form of distortion, again probably due to abuse of the controls, was the souped-up, larger-than-life, this'll-knock-'em sort of tonal quality than-life, this Il-knock-'em sort of tonal quality which one associates with the super-cinema rather than the concert-hall. And there were demonstrations which offered nothing but jazz, musical comedy and other light music, except perhaps those tedious trains—all well enough in their way, but quite insufficient to tell the prospective purchaser what he most wants to learn.

Surely the majority of people who go to the trouble and expense of choosing amplifiers, speakers, pickups and so on individually are music-lovers. They know well enough that almost any reproducer nowadays can out-thud a plucked bass, or bring the percussive toys of a jazz outfit into uncomfortable proximity. What



they would rather know is whether it can capture the sheen on a symphony orchestra's strings without their turning acid in tutti passages, whether it can handle a great choral climax convincingly, or whether it can bring a singer's voice into true focus, without unnatural sibilants . .

In other words (to cut the list short), whether it is musical. One can't expect all electrical engineers to be musicians, but a demonstrator ought at least to know what the real thing sounds like. Some at Harrogate evidently did not. Would it not pay manufacturers (and even retailers) to send their sales staffs, just once in a while, to a concert?

A. H. WOOLRYCH. Leeds.

Organ Recordings

Your recent remarks about the dearth of organ recordings and the "welcome" reply from H.M.V. prompts this sortie into your valuable space because I have once again been searching into the catalogues for availabilities. Further, in examining the deletions from Ducretet-Thomson, I find that two of the best recorded discs are to be lost to the organ public at the end of this month: the Marchal music of Bach and the magnificent Grande Pièce of Franck played by Langlais, the latter filling the empty void of organ music which is not

Jamaica, B.W.I. GEOFFREY L. MORRISON.

Postscript to Brahms review on page 298

The fill-up, a grand but curiously superficial reading of the great Tragic Overture, is offered on the mono version only. For this purpose the third movement is accommodated on side one; the stereo disc, for some reason, puts the third movement on to side two, and omits the overture. This is one case where stereo is more expensive than mono—that is if you happen still to want the Tragic Overture.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Mr. F. E. Attwood

On October 31st, after many months of ill-health, Mr. F. E. Attwood retired from the post of Publicity Manager to Decea Group Records and Decea Radio and Television. He had served the Company since 1936 and took an active part in its post-war expansion, being responsible for the "ffrr" trademark and more recently its "ffss" successor.

Fischer's "Pathétique"

We have been advised by Columbia that the commercial pressings of Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 8, Pathétique, by Annie Fischer (33CX1593) will contain a performance which differs from that submitted to us for review. In the circumstances it is hoped that it will be possible to include a review of this performance in the January, 1959, issue.

A revised libretto for La Traviata with the original Italian text and an English translation by Peggie Cochrane is now available from The Decca Record Co., 9 Albert Embankment, London, S.E.11, price 4s. The English/Italian libretto for Cav. and Pag. (reviewed on page 313) is also available from E.M.I. Records Ltd., 8-11 Great Castle Street, London, W.1., price 5s.

Serenade to Music
On page 211 of the October issue we published a photograph taken at the recording session of Vaughan Williams' Serenade to Music. For the information of those interested we now publish a key to the artists appearing in the photograph. Top, left to right: Walter Widdop, Parry Jones, Frank Titterton, Heddle Nash, Vaughan Williams, Roy Henderson, Harold Williams, Robert Easton and Norman Allin. Seated, left to right: Isobel Baillie, Elsie Suddaby, Eva Turner, Stiles Allen, Sir Henry Wood, Margaret Balfour, Astra Desmond, Muriel Brunskill and Mary Jarred.

"The Gramophone" Exchange & Mart

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JANUARY 1959

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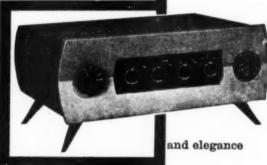
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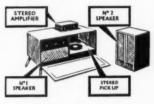
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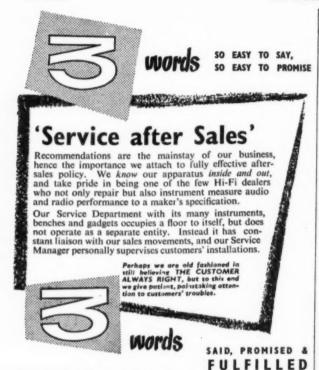
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